careful and ſtrict Examination of the External Covenant, and of the Principles by which it is ſupported.

A REPLY

To the Rev. Mr. Moſes Mather's Piece, entituled, *The Viſible Church in Covenant with God, further illuſtrated*, &c.

A VINDICATION

Of the Plan on which the Churches in New-England were originally formed.

Interſperſed with Remarks upon ſome Things, advanced by Mr. Sandeman, on ſome of the important Points in debate.

By JOSEPH BELLAMY, D. D.

"I do not mention the adminiſtration of ſacraments, upon this occaſion; becauſe, tho' they have ſo noble and effectual tendency "to improve men's minds in piety, and to promote Chriſtian edi- "fication; yet I do not remember to have heard *of any inſtance*, "in which they have been the *means* of men's *converſion*; which "is the leſs to be wondered at, as they are appointed for a very "different end."

Dr. Doddridge *Serm. on regeneration.*

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BRITISH MUSEUM

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ERRATA.

Page.	Line.	
17	19	blot out *it* after *do*.
23	10	from bottom, blot out *and*.
24	9	f. b. read *came*.
36	16	for *containing* read *continuing*.
38	5	r. *ſhould*.
ib.	25	r. *reſolution*.
42	12	r. *proceed*.
45	3	f. b. margin, for *likewiſe* r. *likeneſs*.
59	4	f. b. r. *ſimple*.
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65	9	r. *Pagan*.
ib.	17	for *to* r. *at*.
100	9	f. b. for *revealed* r. *reconciled*.
106	11	f. b. for *aſſent* r. *aſſert*.
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THE PREFACE.

THE deſign of my writing on the ſacramental controverſy, has been to vindicate the plan on which the churches in *New England*, were originally formed, when this country was firſt ſettled by our forefathers. And in order to this, I have had it in my view, to prove theſe three propoſitions, viz.

I. *That thoſe who are qualified to offer their children in baptiſm, are equally qualified to come to the Lord's table*; and that, therefore, the *half-way practice*, which has ſo much prevailed of late in the country, is unſcriptural.

II. *That baptiſm and the Lord's ſupper, are ſeals of the covenant of grace*: and that, therefore, thoſe who know they have no grace, cannot be active in ſealing of it, conſiſtently with honeſty and a good conſcience.

III. *That there is no graceleſs covenant between God and man exiſting, ſuited to the ſtate and temper of graceleſs men, a compliance with which, they might, as ſuch, conſiſtently profeſs and ſeal*: And that, therefore, there is no door open for graceleſs men, as ſuch, to enter into covenant with God. I ſay, I have had it in my view to prove,

1. That thoſe who are qualified to offer their children in baptiſm, are equally qualified to come to the Lord's-table: and that therefore the half-way practice, which of late has ſo much prevailed in the country, is unſcriptural. And this point, theoretically conſidered, ſeems to be ſettled. With reſpect to this, Mr. *Mather*, in his book, entituled, *The viſible church in covenant with God, further illuſtrated*, &c. ſays, p. 78. 'as to the half-way 'practice, I am in it, but not for it. I have no diſpo-'ſition to oppoſe the Dr. in his endeavouring to break 'up that *unſcriptural practice*.' And ſince thoſe miniſters, who are in this practice, do grant it to be *unſcriptural*; which, ſo far as I know, all of them do; nothing now remains, but to put them in mind, that 'the ſecond com-'mandment requireth the receiving, obſerving, and 'keeping pure and entire all ſuch religious worſhip and

'ordinances as God hath appointed in his word.' And the commiſſion of our Lord and Maſter obligeth us to *teach* his diſciples to *obſerve all things whatſoever he hath commanded them.* And how unkind muſt it be in the people to neceſſitate their miniſters, to counteract their own conſciences, by continuing in *an unſcriptural* practice, in condeſcention to their ignorant, unſcriptural notions! But much more unkind ſtill muſt it be in clergymen, who know the practice to be unſcriptural, to lift up their voices on high, and raiſe a popular clamour againſt thoſe miniſters, who, at no ſmall riſque, venture to lay aſide the practice, that they may approve themſelves to God, and to their own conſciences. But it may be ſaid, to Mr. *Mather*'s honor, that he is not of the number of thoſe, who act ſo unkind a part to honeſt men. *

2. Another

* Our forefathers began to ſettle in New England in 1620. Without the half-way practice. It was brought in 1662, forty years after; when the firſt generation were generally dead, by a Synod at *Boſton.* This Synod profeſſed to believe, that none had a right to the ſeals for themſelves, or their children but true believers, and real ſaints: However, they thought a leſs degree of grace would qualify for one ordinance, than for the other. And on this principle the half-way practice was introduced. The principle they acted upon is now given up. We are all agreed, that he who is qualified to offer his children in baptiſm, is equally qualified to come to the Lord's-table. And ſo we are all agreed, that the half-way practice is *unſcriptural.* Some feel themſelves bound in conſcience to make *the ſcripture their only rule of faith and practice:* Others do not think themſelves bound. On this point let the following texts be conſulted, Deut. 4. 2. Mat. 5. 19. Luke 6. 46. and chap. 22. 19. Jam. 2 10 Mat. 28. 20. and ch. 15. 6. Beſides, we who are miniſters, may do well to conſider, that altho' our congregations, while ſecure in ſin, may be well pleaſed with an *unſcriptural practice*; and with us for continuing in it, againſt the light of our own conſciences: Yet, if they ſhould ever be awakened out of their carnal ſecurity, if they ſhould ever be converted, our conduct might ſtand in a ſhocking point of light, in the view of their conſciences.—And yet, from ſabbath to ſabbath we pray, that the Spirit of God may be poured out, and that ſinners may be convinced and converted.—This affair doubtleſs gives pain to many a heart. What a pity it is, that the clergy have not a heart to unite, in what they know to be the true ſcriptural practice! The honour of Chriſt, and of Chriſtianity are intereſted in this matter. It ought to be attended to with the utmoſt ſeriouſneſs and honeſty.

2. Another point I undertook to prove, was this, viz. That baptiſm and the Lord's ſupper are ſeals of the covenant of grace. This was one chief point I had in view in my anſwer to Mr. M's former book on this controverſy. And this point alſo Mr. M. expreſsly grants me in his ſecond book. p. 58. ſpeaking of the covenant with Abraham, he ſays, 'the covenant of grace was evidently 'and confeſſedly contained, ſet forth, and confirmed, by 'the particular appointment of circumciſion.'—But if baptiſm and the Lord's ſupper are ſeals of the covenant of grace, how can thoſe, who knowingly reject the covenant of grace in their hearts, ſeal it with their hands, conſiſtently with honeſty and a good conſcience? Here it may not be amiſs to repeat ſome of the articles of the creed publiſhed in my *Fourth Dialogue*, that the reader may judge for himſelf whether they are true or not.—'I believe, that any man, who ſeals any covenant, doth, 'in and by the act of ſealing, declare his compliance 'with that covenant which he ſeals: becauſe this is the 'import of the act of ſealing.——I believe, that it is of the 'nature of lying, to ſeal a covenant, with which, I do 'not now, and never did comply in my heart; but 'rather habitually and conſtantly reject. Therefore—I 'believe, that a man, who knows he has no grace, cannot ſeal the covenant of grace, honeſtly and with a 'good conſcience.'—It belongs to Mr. *Mather*, if he means to maintain, that thoſe, who know they have no grace, can ſeal the covenant of grace, honeſtly and with a good conſcience, to ſay how. For as yet, he has ſaid nothing on this point.—And indeed, we muſt either give up the import of ſealing; or give up the covenant of grace, as the covenant to be ſealed; or ſay that graceleſs men have ſome grace, and do in a meaſure truly and really comply with the covenant of grace, and ſo have really a title to pardon and eternal life, or we cannot be conſiſtent: nor then neither. For to ſay, that graceleſs men have ſome grace, is a contradiction. And to ſay, they have no grace, and yet may honeſtly ſeal the covenant

nant of grace, is to deny the import of ſealing. For *ſealing a covenant always denotes a preſent conſent of heart to the covenant ſealed.* And, therefore, to ſeal a covenant which I reject with my whole heart, is a practical falſhood. But if I do not reject it with my whole heart, I have a degree of true love to it. That is, I have a degree of true grace: and ſo am in a pardoned and juſtified ſtate. But ſtill it remains true, that thoſe, who know they have no grace, cannot ſeal the covenant of grace with a good conſcience, becauſe it is a practical falſhood. Indeed, men may be ſo far gone in wickedneſs, as to allow themſelves in lying to God and man, but their conduct cannot be juſtified, when, with the aſſembled univerſe, they appear before the bar of God. For, as has been ſaid, *ſealing a covenant always denotes a preſent conſent of heart to the covenant ſealed.* In this ſenſe it has always been underſtood by mankind in their covenants between one another, in *deeds*, in *bonds*, &c. Sealing denotes a preſent conſent of heart to the contents of the written inſtrument. And, therefore, no honeſt man will ſeal the written inſtrument until in heart he conſents to the contents of it. And ſhould any man ſeal a written inſtrument, and at the ſame time declare before evidences, that at preſent he did not conſent to it, it was *not his free act and deed*, the act of ſealing would in its own nature be of no ſignificance. The whole tranſaction would be perfect trifling.—Mr. M. ſays, p. 65. 'I am very 'ſenſible, that the Chriſtian church has always eſteemed 'ſealing ordinances, as ſeals of the covenant of grace.— 'On God's part, they are ſeals to the truth of *the whole* 'revealed will of God. On our part, they are ſeals bind-'ing us, to pay a due regard to *the whole revelation.* And 'accordingly, any breach of *moral rule*, or *goſpel precept* 'has been eſteemed by the church, as a breach of cove-'nant in its members.'——He, therefore, who is habitually, totally deſtitute of that holineſs which the law of God requires, and of that repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jeſus Chriſt to which in the goſ-

pe

pel we are invited, and lives in a total neglect of that religion which flows from the love, repentance and faith required in the law and goſpel: even he does not conſent to the covenant of grace in his heart, in the leaſt degree, but lives habitually, totally and univerſally, in the breach of it, without ever complying with it in one ſingle act.—And can a man conſcious to himſelf, that this is his character, with a good conſcience ſeal this covenant! Or can a Chriſtian church allow of ſuch hypocriſy!

3. The other point which I deſigned to prove was this, that there is no graceleſs covenant between God and man exiſting; that is, no covenant in which God promiſes religious privileges and ſpiritual bleſſings to graceleſs men, upon graceleſs conditions; i. e. to graceleſs qualifications, which graceleſs men, while ſuch, may have: and that, therefore, baptiſm and the Lord's ſupper cannot be ſeals to ſuch a covenant.—And Mr. M. in his preface ſeems as if he intended to give up this point alſo: for he calls this graceleſs covenant 'a graceleſs phantom:' which is really to grant the whole that I contend for. For this is the very point I meant to prove, viz. The non-exiſtence of ſuch a covenant. For God's covenant requires holineſs and nothing elſe. And it promiſes eternal life to thoſe who comply with it. But its bleſſings are not promiſed to graceleſs men, as ſuch, nor to graceleſs qualifications.

However, if we will read Mr. M's book through, we ſhall ſee, that he is ſo far from giving up this covenant, as 'a graceleſs phantom,' that he has exerted himſelf to the utmoſt to ſave this 'graceleſs phantom' from non-exiſtence. Becauſe, without it, he knows no way in which graceleſs men, as ſuch, can be admitted into the viſible church of Chriſt. For he does not pretend, that they can make a profeſſion of godlineſs: yea, he is confident, that none may warrantably make a profeſſion of godlineſs unleſs they have the higheſt degree of aſſurance. p. 79. There muſt, therefore, be a graceleſs covenant, for graceleſs men, as ſuch to profeſs, which

requires

requires nothing more, nothing higher, than graceleſs qualifications, as neceſſary conditions of its bleſſings, or, graceleſs men, as ſuch, cannot profeſs a preſent conſent to any covenant at all; and ſo cannot be admitted, as members of the viſible church, which he ſays 'is in covenant with God;' or have a covenant right to covenant bleſſings. For they who are deſtitute of the qualifications neceſſary to a covenant right to covenant bleſſings, can have no covenant right to them. To ſay, otherwiſe, is an expreſs contradiction.

The method, which, in my former piece, I took to prove the non-exiſtence of ſuch a graceleſs covenant, as has been deſcribed, was (1.) to turn the reader to the covenant with Abraham, the covenant at Sinai and in the Plains of Moab, and to the goſpel covenant, that he might ſee with his own eyes, that theſe were, each of them, holy covenants, which required a holy faith, a holy love, a holy repentance, a holy obedience; and that thoſe who have theſe holy qualifications are entitled to eternal life. Nor is there any matter of fact in ſcripture plainer than this. So that none of theſe, were that graceleſs covenant, for which Mr. M. contends: which promiſes its bleſſings to graceleſs men, as ſuch. Nor has Mr. M. pointed out one unholy duty in that covenant with Abraham. Gen. 17. Nor one unholy duty in that covenant at Sinai, or in that covenant in the Plains of Moab, or in the goſpel covenant. Nor has he denied, that eternal life is promiſed to every one who complies with God's covenant, as exhibited in theſe various ways, at theſe ſeveral times. So that my argument from the nature of the covenant, as it is to be found in the written inſtrument, ſtands unanſwered.---And let it be remembered, that this argument is concluſive, without determining the nature of holineſs, or faith, or repentance, or entering at all into the diſputes, which ſubſiſt between the *Calviniſts*, *Arminians*, *Neonomians*, *Anti-Nomians*, &c. relative to the perfection of the divine law, total depravity, regeneration, &c. &c. For if it be proved,

proved, that God's covenant, to which God's ſeals are annexed, promiſes ſalvation to thoſe who conſent to it, and that there is a certain connexion between a real compliance with it and eternal life, then Mr. M's external covenant, to which he ſays the ſeals are annexed, which does not promiſe ſalvation to thoſe who conſent to it, nor eſtabliſhes any certain connexion between a real compliance with it and eternal Life, is eſſentially different from God's covenant, and ſo is ſtrictly ſpeaking, 'a graceleſs phantom,'---But (2.) in order to prove the non-exiſtence of a graceleſs covenant, I introduced the doctrines of *the perfection of the divine law* and of *total depravity*, into the argument, as thus, ſince the divine law requires holineſs and nothing but holineſs, and ſince the unregenerate are totally deſtitute of the holineſs required, there is therefore no covenant exiſting, between God and man, with which, the unregenerate, while ſuch, do comply, in the leaſt degree. Upon which Mr. M. declares 'that 'he is become ſenſible, that our different ſentiments in 'this particular (terms of communion) is in a great 'meaſure, owing to our thinking differently, upon other 'important points.' And ſo he has offered to the public his own ſcheme of religion, which may be ſummed up in theſe *eight articles.*

1. *That ſelf-love is eſſential to moral agency.* And,

2. *That this ſelf-love, which is eſſential to moral agency, is, by the divine law, required of us, as our duty.*

3. *That this ſelf-love, which is eſſential to moral agency and our required duty, is, in our preſent guilty ſtate, abſolutely inconſiſtent with that love to God, which the law originally required of Adam before the fall, and which is ſtill required in the moral law.*

4. *That our natural total depravity ariſes merely and only from its being thus inconſiſtent with this ſelf-love to love God.*

5. *That in theſe circumſtances it is contrary to the law of God, and ſo a ſinful thing, for us to love God.*

6. *That our natural total depravity not being of a criminal nature, doth not diſqualify us for ſealing ordinances. As*

it

it entirely ceaſes to be our duty ſince the fall to love that character of God which was exhibited in the law to Adam.

And more eſpecially,

7. *That now ſince the fall we are naturally inclined and diſpoſed, our total depravity notwithſtanding, to love the new character of God which is revealed in the goſpel, ſo that we ſhall, without fail, love it as ſoon as known, without any new principle of grace.* For theſe things being true, it will follow,

8 *That unregenerate Sinners, who are awakened and externally reformed, muſt be conſidered, as being in the temper of their hearts, as well affected to the goſpel, did they but know it, as the regenerate; and their religious deſires and endeavours, as being of the ſame nature and tendency. And therefore they may enter into covenant with God and attend ſealing ordinances, with as much propriety as the regenerate.*

This is the ſum and ſubſtance of his ſcheme. And in this ſcheme of principles we may ſee the fundamental grounds of his thinking differently from us, in the particular point under conſideration. viz. The terms of Communion.

The deſign of the following ſheets is, firſt of all, to review Mr. M's external covenant, to ſee if its true and real nature can be known. And then to ſhew its inconſiſtance with the doctrines of the perfection of the divine law, and of total depravity, as held forth in the public formulas approved by the Church of *Scotland*, and by the Churches in *New-England*. After which, the leading ſentiments of his ſceme of religion ſhall be conſidered, his miſtakes be pointed out, and the oppoſite truths be briefly ſtated and proved from the word God. That the nature of ancient apoſtolic Chriſtianity may be aſcertained from the infallible oracles of truth. To the end, that the right road to Heaven may be kept open and plain, for the direction of awakened ſinners, and for the confirmation and comfort of young converts.

The INTRODUCTION.

Several phraſes explained and queſtions ſtated.

IN order to prevent and cut off all needleſs diſputes, and that the reader may clearly underſtand the following ſheets, the meaning of ſeveral phraſes ſhall be explained. Particularly,

1. By a *conditional covenant* is meant, a covenant, which promiſes its bleſſings upon ſome certain condition; ſo that no one can claim a covenant right to its bleſſings, if deſtitute of the requiſite qualifications.

2. By the *covenant of works* is meant, that covenant, which promiſes eternal life upon condition of perfect obedience, thro' the appointed time of trial, and threatens eternal death for one tranſgreſſion.

3. By the *covenant of grace* is meant, that covenant which promiſes pardon, juſtification and eternal life thro' Jeſus Chriſt to all who repent and believe the goſpel; i. e. to real ſaints and to no others.

4. By a *graceleſs covenant* is meant, a covenant which promiſes its bleſſing, to graceleſs men, as ſuch, on certain conditions, or qualifications, which are profeſſedly graceleſs, and which may take place in graceleſs men, while ſuch.

5. By *complying with a covenant* is meant, doing that, or having thoſe qualifications, which, according to the tenor of the covenant, entitles to its bleſſings. Thus, for inſtance, Adam could not have been ſaid to have complied with the covenant of works which he was under, until he had perſevered in perfect obedience, thro' the whole time of trial. For nothing ſhort of this would have entitled him to a confirmed ſtate of holineſs and happineſs, i. e. to eternal life; as all grant. And, thus, a ſinner cannot be ſaid to have complied with the covenant of grace, whatever legal terrors he has had, and

whatever pains he has taken in religion, until by the firſt act of ſaving faith he is united to Jeſus Chriſt; for nothing ſhort of this entitles him to pardon, juſtification and eternal life, according to the goſpel. As is written, *Joh.* 3. 18, 36. *He that believeth not is condemned already*, and *the wrath of God abideth on him.* Indeed Mr. M. ſays, p. 29. 'that no man, ſhort of perfection, can 'be properly ſaid to have complied with the goſpel.' But our Saviour declares, with great ſolemnity, *Joh.* 5. 24. *Verily, verily I ſay unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that ſent me, hath everlaſting life, and ſhall not come into condemnation; but is paſſed from death to life.* So that, on the firſt act of ſaving faith, a ſinner becomes entitled to eternal life. *Gal.* 3. 26, 29. *For ye are all the children of God by faith in Jeſus Chriſt. And if ye be Chriſt's then are ye Abraham's ſeed, and heirs according to the promiſe.* Again, a man may be ſaid to have complied with any ſuppoſed graceleſs covenant, when he has the graceleſs qualifications, to which the bleſſings of that covenant are promiſed, but not before. So that, if a 'fixed reſolution to forſake all known ſin, and practiſe 'all known duty' is a requiſite qualification to the bleſſings of this covenant, then no man has a covenant right to the bleſſings of it, until he is 'come to this fixed reſolution;' i. e. if there is an external covenant, 'diſtinct from the covenant of grace,' promiſing to the viſible church all the 'external means of grace, and the ſtrivings of God's holy ſpirit, in order to render them effectual for ſalvation,' by which the viſible church is conſtituted: And if this 'fixed reſolution' is abſolutely neceſſary to church-membership, and ſo to a title to theſe promiſes, then no man has a title to theſe promiſes, or is qualified to be admitted a member of the viſible church, until he is, in fact, 'come to this fixed reſolution:' but whenever he is 'come to this fixed reſolution,' he ought to be conſidered, as having complied with the external covenant; and ſo, as having a covenant right to its bleſſings. Mr. M. ſays, p. 64. that I have 'a

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'very ſingular notion about the nature of covenanting; 'as if it required a *preſent compliance with* EVERY *thing* 'required by the covenant into which they enter.'— This I never ſaid.—But indeed I do think, that it is a contradiction in terms, to ſay, that *a covenant promiſes certain bleſſings to thoſe, and to thoſe only, who have certain qualifications; and yet ſome who have not the required qualifications have a covenant right to the bleſſings promiſed.* Nor am I 'ſingular in this notion,' for all mankind think ſo too. However, 'that no man ſhort of perfection, can be pro- 'perly ſaid to have complied with the goſpel,' is a very 'ſingular notion,' indeed; and, in effect makes the covenant of works and the covenant of grace, preciſely one and the ſame thing. But to proceed,

6. By entering into covenant, and engaging to perform the duties which the covenant requires, a man binds himſelf to be doing the duties required by the covenant, in the manner in which he engages to do them, as long as the covenant is in force. To ſay otherwiſe, is to ſay, that a man binds himſelf, and yet does not bind himſelf, which is an expreſs contradiction. Thus the Iſraelites at Mount Sinai, and in the Plains of Moab, bound themſelves and their poſterity to obſerve all the rites of the ceremonial law, ſo long as that ſhould be in force: But when the ceremonial law was abrogated, they were no longer bound to obſerve its rites. And thus, if Mr. M's *external covenant*, does in fact require religious duties to be done in a graceleſs manner, ſo long as ſinners remain graceleſs, and no longer; then as ſoon as ever ſinners are converted, they are free from the bonds of this covenant, as much as the Jews were from the ceremonial law, at the reſurrection of Chriſt: and ſo are *then* at liberty to enter into the covenant of grace, and to engage *to live by faith on the Son of God*, and to be *holy in all manner of converſation, preſſing towards* perfection, *the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus:* but *not till then.* Agreeable to the Apoſtle's reaſoning in *Rom.* 7. 1, 2, 3. But if this external covenant, which

requires

requires duties to be done in a graceleſs manner, is, in fact, binding for life; if it is, in this ſenſe, an *everlaſting covenant*, as was the covenant with Abraham, *Gen.* 17. then, no man, who has entered into it, is at liberty, while he lives, to ceaſe performing duties in a graceleſs manner. *For the woman which hath an huſband, is bound by the law to her huſband, ſo long as he liveth; but if the huſband be dead, ſhe is looſed from the law of her huſband. So then if while her huſband liveth, ſhe be married to another man, ſhe ſhall be called an adultreſs: but if her huſband be dead, ſhe is free from that law; ſo that ſhe is no adultreſs, though ſhe be married to another man.* Mr. M. may now take his choice. He may ſay, that his external covenant which requires duties to be done in a graceleſs manner is binding for life, or it is not. If it is not binding for life, then it is ſelf evident, that it is not *an everlaſting covenant*, like that in Gen. 17. If it is binding for life, then he, who enters into it, binds himſelf to perform all duties in a graceleſs manner as long as he lives. This difficulty againſt his ſcheme he has not removed. Nor has he ventured to look it fairly in the face. See p. 30, 31, 32.

7. By an *unconditional covenant* is meant, a covenant which promiſes its bleſſings to all whom it reſpects, without any condition at all; ſo that no qualification at all, of any kind, is neceſſary in order to a covenant right to all its bleſſings. Thus God's covenant with *Noah* and with his ſeed, and with every living creature with him, even with the fowl and with every beaſt of the earth, that *all fleſh ſhould no more be cut off by the waters of the flood*, is of the nature of an *unconditional grant*, conveying the promiſed ſecurity to all, without reſpect to any qualification whatever.

Queſtion 1. Is Mr. M's external covenant *conditional*, or *unconditional?* If unconditional, then no qualification whatever is requiſite in order to a covenant right to all its bleſſings. Pagans, Turks, Jews, Deiſts, Hereticks and the Scandalous, have as good a right, as ſuch, to partake

partake at the Lord's table, as to hear the goſpel preached ——If *conditional*, then,

Queſtion 2. Doth Mr. M's external covenant require, as a condition of its bleſſings, holy exerciſes of heart, or unholy exerciſes of heart, or no exerciſe of heart at all, nothing but external bodily motions, conſidered as unconnected with any volition? If holy exerciſes of heart, then no graceleſs man, as ſuch, hath a right to its bleſſings. If unholy exerciſes of heart, then it is a graceleſs covenant, which he ſays is 'a graceleſs phantom.' If no exerciſe of heart at all, nothing but external, bodily motions; then our hearts have nothing to do with it; and we need not concern our ſelves about it; for it is not a thing of a moral nature; and ſo has no concern in the buſineſs of religion.

Had Mr. M. firſt of all acquired determinate ideas himſelf, and then given an exact definition of his external covenant, which he has, in a public manner, been called upon to do it, it would have rendered his readers work eaſy: but now it is ſo difficult to know what he means, that even his moſt learned admirers are not agreed, whether his external covenant is conditional, or unconditional. However, let us hear him explain himſelf.

SECTION I.

The nature of Mr. M's external covenant, as ſtated and explained by himſelf, under the notion of a conditional covenant.

AS our author has no where particularly enumerated the peculiar privileges and bleſſings of his external covenant, which thoſe and thoſe only are entitled to, who are in it; nor particularly ſtated its conditions; nor ſo much as let us know with certainty whether it be conditional,

conditional, or unconditional; ſo there is no way but to look thro' both his books, and pick up here and there what we can, in order to determine what he means, and conſider it in every point of light in which he ſets it.

And *Firſt*, we ſhall conſider it as *a conditional covenant*. And in this view of it we may obſerve the following things.

1. In his firſt book, p. 58. he expreſsly declares, 'that the external covenant between God and the viſible church is diſtinct from the covenant of grace.' And he ſpeaks of this, as what he had thro' his whole book been 'endeavouring to eſtabliſh.' And in his ſecond book, p. 60—64. he undertakes to prove this point over again at large; that it is 'of a different tenor,' and made for 'a different purpoſe,' from the covenant of grace. I mention this, becauſe ſome think, that he means the covenant of grace by his external covenant.

2. He affirms over and over, 'that the external covenant has no reſpect to a gracious ſtate of heart.' And it is a chief deſign of both his books to prove this point; that ſo he may prove that unregenerate, graceleſs men, as ſuch, may be qualified to enter into it, and may have a covenant right in the ſight of God to all its bleſſings. So that, profeſſedly, no conditions are required, but thoſe which are graceleſs; no qualifications are requiſite, but thoſe which are unholy; for he affirms, that the unregenerate are 'totally depraved,' and in 'a ſtate of enmity againſt God.' p. 52. And that they do not perform 'any truly, holy obedience.' p. 17. So that, his external covenant, if conditional, is a graceleſs covenant.

But it is conditional, for

3. He ſays, in his firſt book, p. 21. 'That none but 'ſuch as profeſs the Chriſtian religion, and will endea-'vour to conform his practice to the rules of it, ought to 'be admitted into the church.' And accordingly, p. 42, 43, 44. inſiſts that the 'diſorderly and vicious' ſhould be debarred. But if it is a conditional covenant, and if it requires merely graceleſs qualifications as the condition of its privileges, then it is a graceleſs covenant. For

that

that covenant which promiſes its bleſſings to graceleſs men, on graceleſs conditions, is a graceleſs covenant.

4. If Mr. M's external covenant promiſes certain bleſſings and privileges upon ſome certain conditions; ſo as that thoſe who are ſo and ſo qualified may be members of the viſible church, and no others, then it is of great importance to know preciſely, what theſe conditions, what theſe qualifications are, as otherwiſe no man can poſſibly determine, whether he hath them, and ſo whether he may lawfully join with the church, and ſeal the covenant. And this is more neceſſary on Mr. M's ſcheme, than on any other, becauſe he holds, which we do not, that no man may enter into covenant with God in a public profeſſion of religion, and join with the church, unleſs he *infallibly knows*, that he has the neceſſary qualifications, unleſs he is as certain of it as a man called to give evidence in a civil court is of a fact which he ſees, and to the truth of which he can make oath before the civil magiſtrate. p. 79. But if men muſt be thus certain, that they have the requiſite qualifications, before they can with a good conſcience join with the church, then they muſt, in this high ſenſe, be certain, what qualifications are requiſite. Yea, there are four things, concerning which they muſt have the ſame degree of certainty as they have about any fact which they ſee with their eyes, before they can, on his plan, with a good conſcience, join with the church. (1.) That the Bible is the word of God, becauſe this is the grand charter of all church privileges. (2.) That Mr. M's external covenant is contained in the Bible, and is that, on which, the viſible church is conſtituted. Becauſe otherwiſe no man has any right, on this plan, to join with the church. (3.) What qualifications are neceſſary according to this external covenant to fit them to join with the church and attend ſealing ordinances. And then, (4.) They muſt be as certain that they have theſe qualifications, as that ever they ſaw the ſun.—Now he thinks, that on our ſcheme, many true ſaints will be kept back from the

Lord's

Lord's table; but on his ſcheme, it is evident, that no one graceleſs man, whoſe conſcience is awake, and who knows any thing conſiderable about his own heart, can join with the church: becauſe there never was, nor will be any ſuch ſinner, who can ſay, that he is as certain of theſe four things, as he is of a fact which he has ſeen with his eyes, and of the truth of which he can make oath before the civil magiſtrate. *

But at preſent the only queſtion is this, viz. What are the qualifications which are requiſite to full communion in the viſible church, according to Mr. M's external covenant? The covenant of works requires perfection, as the condition of its bleſſings: The covenant of grace requires repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, as the condition of *its* bleſſings: But what does Mr. M's external graceleſs covenant require, as the condition of *its* bleſſings? What qualifications are requiſite to bring a man into this covenant, and to give him a right to all the privileges and bleſſings of it, in the ſight of God? If this queſtion cannot receive a ſatisfactory anſwer, on Mr. M's ſcheme, then his ſcheme can never be practiſed upon. He gave no ſatisfactory anſwer to it, in his firſt book, as was ſhewn in the VIth ſection of my reply to it. He has now made another attempt to anſwer

* Mr. Mather, in his Preface, ſays, "I am not ſo fond of my own "judgment, or tenacious of my own practice, but that I ſtand ready *to* "*give them both up*, when any one ſhall do the friendly office of ſitting "light before me."—He himſelf, therefore, cannot ſwear to the truth of his ſcheme; he has not "that certain knowledge" of it, that he has "of a particular fact, about which he is called to give an evidence, in a civil court." It is only his "prevailing opinion." P. 79. And if his external covenant is a mere human device, his practice upon it is what God hath not required at his hands. He has no warrant to put God's ſeals to a covenant deviſed by man. And, according to his ſcheme, he ought not to act in this affair without abſolute certainty. To be conſiſtent, he ought to act no more on his plan, until he is infallibly certain, that it is his duty. For, to uſe his own argument, p. 79. "if it being a real duty is that which gives us a real right to "act; then it being a known duty is that which gives us a known "right." And I may add, "this is a ſelf-evident propoſition."—But more of this, in *Sect.* XI.

anſwer this queſtion in his ſecond book. Let us hear his anſwer, and conſider it.

He ſays, p. 64. 'That perfection is expreſsly required in this external covenant.'—What!—as a condition of its bleſſings! as a neceſſary qualification to full communion in the viſible church! which was the only point in hand.—If ſo, then no mere man ſince the fall might join with the viſible church.

He ſays, p. 64. 'This covenant requires the holy obedience of a gracious ſtate.'—What! again, I ſay, as a condition of its bleſſings! as a neceſſary qualification to full communion in the viſible church! the only point in hand. If ſo, then no graceleſs man, as ſuch, can be admitted into the viſible church.

He ſays, p. 65. 'This covenant requires the utmoſt endeavours of the unregenerate.'—What!—ſtill I repeat it, as a condition of its bleſſings! as a neceſſary qualification to full communion in the viſible church! the only point in hand. If ſo, then no unregenerate man, who has not as yet uſed his utmoſt endeavours, can, as ſuch, be admitted into the viſible church, which will keep out every unregenerate man, becauſe no ſuch unregenerate man ever exiſted.

Again, having ſpoken of the convictions, that the unregenerate may have, he ſays, p. 65. 'Under theſe convictions, he may come to a fixed reſolution, to forſake all known ſin, and to practiſe all known duty; ſet himſelf to ſeek an intereſt in Chriſt, and to ſeek needed influences of divine grace. And he may confirm theſe reſolutions upon his own ſoul, by a ſolemn covenant dedication of himſelf to God; engaging by divine aſſiſtance to obey the whole will of God, one particular of which is to believe on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. And I will add, that he may confirm this covenant between God and his own ſoul by goſpel ſeals. It cannot be denied, that the natural powers of our ſouls do render us capable of ſuch covenanting with God. And the only queſtion is, whether God has required this of ſin-

'ners. This is the queſtion in diſpute.'----Upon which, the following obſervations may be made.

1. Was this the covenant in *Gen.* 17? Was Abraham 'under conviction?' Had he come to ſuch unregenerate 'fixed reſolutions?' Did he bind himſelf in ſome future time to believe? No, juſt the reverſe. Abraham had been converted above twenty years before this tranſaction in Gen. 17. And had both believed, and obeyed, in a ſaving manner, thro' all this period. So that 'the queſtion in diſpute' is not whether Abraham entered into this covenant in Gen. 17. for Mr. M. does not pretend he did. And therefore the covenant with Abraham, *Gen.* 17. and this covenant of Mr. M's are not the ſame, but very different. His external covenant, therefore, is, as he declares, 'diſtinct from the covenant of grace,' and 'of a different tenor,' and for 'a different purpoſe.' For nothing was more remote from Abraham's mind, then to enter into covenant, and bind himſelf to a courſe of unregenerate duties, in order to obtain converting grace. 'Of this there is no diſpute.' So that 'this is NOT the queſtion in diſpute,' whether Mr. M's external covenant is the ſame with that covenant into which Abraham perſonally entered, *Gen.* 17. Where then in all the Bible will Mr. M. find his external covenant, as above defined? For no ſuch covenant was ever exhibited by the God of Iſrael. Beſides,

2. It may be enquired, what does Mr. M. mean, by 'engaging to obey the whole will of God?' For, (1.) does he mean, that men, who know they have no grace, when they join with the church, do covenant and promiſe, that they will, from that time and forward, as long as they live, *be perfectly holy?* and ſo, in fact, 'obey the whole will of God?' But this is to promiſe to do, what they infallibly know they ſhall not do; which is a piece of ſcandalous immorality. For ſuch promiſes are no better than wilful lies. And this therefore cannot be the thing he means. Or, (2.) does he mean, that a ſinner, under conviction, enters into covenant with God, that

that he will, in fact, repent and believe, the moment he joins with the church, and from that time and forward, as long as he lives, perſevere in a life of faith and holineſs, preſſing forward toward perfection? But this, again, is not much better than wilful lying. For it is to promiſe, that which he has no ſufficient reaſon to expect, that he ſhall do, as he has no heart to do it, and no title to 'the divine aſſiſtance,' to give him a heart to do it. And, beſides, if he expected to be converted ſo ſoon, he might wait only one week longer, and ſo be converted before the next ſabbath; and thus put an end to all controverſy about the affair. This, therefore, I ſuppoſe, is what no awakened ſinner ever meant, when he joined with the church; and what Mr. M. would not have them to mean. And therefore (3.) all that awakened ſinners can mean, or that Mr. M. can be ſuppoſed to intend, that they ſhould mean, when they 'engage to obey the whole will of God' is no more, than that they ſhould 'endeavour' to do it; as he expreſſed himſelf in the firſt book. P. 21. 'And I will allow, that 'none but ſuch as profeſs the Chriſtian religion, and 'will *endeavour* to conform his practice to the rules of it, 'ought to be admitted into the church.' And if this be his meaning, why did not Mr. M. anſwer the queſtions, which were put to him, in my former piece, p. 51. 'But, pray, how much muſt they endeavour?' &c. &c. And, beſides, if this is all, if all they mean is to bind themſelves to unregenerate, unholy, graceleſs duties and endeavours, then it will follow, that theſe graceleſs duties, and according to Mr. M. are the 'whole will of God.' For they engage 'to obey the whole will of God.' And, on the preſent hypotheſis, unregenerate duties are all they engage. And therefore theſe unregenerate duties are all that God requires of them. But will Mr. M. ſay this? No, by no means. For he expreſsly declares p. 27. 'nothing ſhort of perfection may be looked upon as the whole of what is required.' What then does Mr. M. mean? In his *Preface*, he ſay, 'I have endeavoured

both

both in this, and in my former piece, 'to ſet my ſentiments in a plan and intelligible light.' We believe he has 'endeavoured' to do it, but yet he has not done it. For no conſiſtent meaning can be put upon his words. But,

3. Perhaps it will be ſaid, that Mr. M. has with great plainefs exactly ſtated the requiſite qualifications for church-membership, in theſe words "a fixed reſolution to forſake all known ſin and practiſe all known duty," if we only underſtand his words in their plain, common, literal meaning.—But is this his meaning? or will he ſtand to it? For (1.) the candidate for admiſſion is to come to a fixed reſolution to forſake "all known ſin." But enmity to God, impenitence and unbelief are "known ſins," as all acknowledge, but groſs *Antinomians*. (2.) And to practiſe "all known duty." But to repent and believe the goſpel, to love God and our neighbour, to lead lives of univerſal holineſs, are "know duties." For all who profeſs to believe the Bible to be the word of God do in fact acknowledge theſe to be duties indiſpenſibly required of all the diſciples of Chriſt; yea, of all to whom the goſpel comes; groſs *Antinomians* excepted. To be ſure, our Saviour affirms, that *no man can be his diſciple unleſs he doth deny himſelf, take up his croſs and follow him.* And (3.) the canditate for admiſſion into the viſible Church is to come to "a fixed reſolution" to do all this; to a reſolution which is 'fixed' in oppoſition to one that is *unfixed*; ſo that his *goodneſs ſhall not be like the morning cloud and early dew, which quickly paſſeth away.* Or like the ſtony and thorny ground hearers in the parable, Mat. 3. All whoſe religion come to nothing, becauſe their reſolutions were not 'fixed.' Now will Mr. M. ſtand to this, that none ought to be admitted into the viſible church, but thoſe, who are thus indeed and in truth 'come to a fixed reſolution to forſake all known ſin, and practiſe all known duty?' And who are ſo infallibly certain, that they are come to this 'fixed reſolution,' that they could give oath to it, with the ſame aſſurance as they could to any matter of fact which they ſee with

their

their eyes? Without which assurance, according to him, no one can with a good conscience make a public profession of religion, and enter into covenant with God. P. 79. If he will, every unregenerate man in the world will be secluded, as will appear before we have done.

Look thro' the Bible, and you will find no class of unregenerate men, so very self-conceited, as to be habitually confident, that they have 'a fixed resolution to forsake all known sin and practise all known duty,' but the Pharisees. They could say. *All these things have I done from my youth up.* And *lo, these many years do I serve thee neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment.* And the very reason and ground of their confidence was their ignorance of the true nature of the divine law. As it is written, *for without the law sin was dead, And so I was alive without the law once.* For every sinner, who knows himself to be unregenerate, under genuine conviction, knows, that he is *under the dominion of sin, dead in sin,* having no heart to repent, and forsake "all known sin," and to turn to God, and to the practice of "all known duty." For in this unregeneracy consists, viz. in having *no heart to turn from sin to God.* And even every sinner, who is only a little orthodox in his head, knows, that, according to scripture, the resolutions and religion of unregenerate sinners, instead of being "fixed," is like that of *the stony and thorny ground hearers*; and like *the morning cloud and the early dew, which quickly passeth away.* Besides, the Pharisees really thought, that they were godly men. So that, indeed, there is not one single instance of a man, in scripture, who, knowing himself to be unregenerate, yet thought himself, as such, come to such a 'fixed resolution;' much less, that was 'infallibly certain' of it.

But to be more particular.

If none may be admitted into the visible church but those, who are come to this 'fixed resolution,' and who are quite certain that their resolution is 'fixed,' then what will Mr. M. do with infants? For, according to this rule, if his own reasoning is conclusive, when disputing against

againſt us, all infants ought to be ſecluded. For we have no evidence concerning any one in particular, that it is come to this 'fixed reſolution.' For thus he reaſons againſt us, in his firſt book, p. 15. 'None can ſuppoſe, that every male among Abraham's ſeed, in all 'ſucceeding generations, were truly gracious, by the 'time they were eight days old.' And in his ſecond book, p. 63. he ſays, 'Nor can the proof of it, which I 'before offered, be evaded without aſſerting, that Abra'ham had ſufficient grounds, for a rational judgment of 'charity, that all his ſeed would be in a gracious ſtate, 'by the time they were eight days old.' This he ſays, in order to prove, that ſaving grace is not a neceſſary qualification to church-membership, even in the adult. And it equally proves, that ſuch a 'fixed reſolution' is not neceſſary. 'For none can ſuppoſe, that every male, 'among Abraham's ſeed, in all ſucceeding generations, 'were come to this fixed reſolution, by the time they 'were eight days old.' But as he adds, p. 63. 'There 'was an expreſs command to confirm the covenant with 'them at the age of eight days; which is an inconteſti'ble evidence, that a gracious ſtate'—And we may add, that ſuch 'a fixed reſolution'—'was not conſidered, as 'neceſſary in order to their being taken into covenant, 'and becoming compleat members of the viſible church.'

Again, This rule of admiſſion into the viſible church laid down by Mr. M. muſt, according to his own way of reaſoning, have ſecluded, in a manner, the whole congregation of Iſrael, who entered into covenant at Mount Sinai. For they were not come to this 'fixed reſolution to forſake all known ſin.' For he obſerves, p. 71. 'How ſoon did they corrupt themſelves, when Moſes was gone up into the mount,' and fell into that 'known ſin' if idolatry. And therefore to uſe his own words, and to turn his own reaſoning againſt himſelf, p. 71. "It is beyond the utmoſt ſtretch of charity, to ſup'poſe, that the people who then entered into covenant,' were come to 'a fixed reſolution to forſake all known ſin.'

Indeed,

Indeed, it is certain they were not. And therefore it is certain, according to Mr. M's way of reaſoning, that ſuch a fixed reſolution was 'not reſpected' in the external covenant, as a neceſſary qualification: much leſs, an infallible certainty that they had it. And this conſequence he ſeems to have been aware of, when he ſaid, p. 71. 'No, it is plain, God proceeded to take them into covenant by MERE SOVEREIGNTY; even as in his covenant with Abraham, he included his infant ſeed.' And ſo, again, ſpeaking of the Iſraelites covenanting in the Plains of Moab, he ſays, p. 72, 73. 'By ABSOLUTE SOVEREINGNTY, God extends this covenant, and this oath, even to ſuch, whoſe conſent to it was not ſo much as aſked---and as the conſent to this covenant was not ſo much as aſked of ſome that were taken into it, it is abundantly evident, that they were not taken into it, as gracious perſons.' And we may add, that it is equally evident, that they were not taken in, as perſons 'come to a fixed reſolution to forſake all known ſin, and to practiſe all known duty.'---And thus we ſee Mr. M. if his reaſoning is concluſive, has confuted his own ſcheme, and has proved that his external covenant, which requires ſuch 'fixed reſolutions,' in order to enter into covenant with God, was not the covenant on which the viſible church was conſtituted. And he has found out a *new way*, never before heard of, of taking the adult into covenant, 'without aſking their conſent, by mere ſovereignty;' even as infants are taken in, without reſpect to any qualification in them whatſoever.---Becauſe it is ſaid in Deut 29. *Neither with you only do I make this covenant*, &c. *but alſo with him that is not here.* Juſt as it is among us, when a miniſter is ordained, and ſome of the members of the church are neceſſarily abſent on the ordination-day, the covenant between the paſtor and the church is made with the whole church, the conſent of the abſent members being taken for granted. Or elſe theſe words have reſpect to thoſe who were then unborn, even

to

to all future generations, who were compriſed in that covenant, juſt as infants were. But to return,

Mr. M. ſo far forgets himſelf, as entirely to give up not only the neceſſity of ſuch 'a fixed reſolution,' but of any qualification whatſoever; and even expreſsly declares, that his external covenant is *abſolute* and *unconditional*, and that herein it differs from the covenant grace, p. 60, 61, 62. But if his external covenant is merely an abſolute and unconditional grant of certain privileges & bleſſings; then ſince the wall of partition between Jew and Gentile is removed by Chriſt, it gives the whole Gentile world as much right to the Lord's-table, as to the word preached, without reſpect to any qualification whatever. For a Pagan, a Turk, or a Jew, while ſuch, have a right to hear the goſpel preached, for the grant is unconditional. *Go preach the goſpel to every creature*. And if all the privileges of the viſible church of Chriſt were made as common, by a grant equally unconditional, a Pagan, a Turk, or a Jew would have, as ſuch, as good a right to baptiſm and the Lord's-table, as to hear the goſpel preached. So now the viſible church of Chriſt becomes inviſible, being abſorbed and ſwallowed up in the world, without any mark of diſtinction, according to Mr. M.

It may be obſerved that our author ſays, that in my former piece I have 'wholly miſrepreſented his ſentiments,' and given his ſcheme the 'bad name of a graceleſs covenant.' And if he all along meant that his external covenant was a mere abſolute, unconditional grant, which has 'no reſpect to a gracious ſtate of heart,' nor to any other qualification whatever, then I own, I have 'wholly miſrepreſented his ſentiments' in my former piece. But then he ought as frankly to own, that he has in his former piece 'wholly miſrepreſented' them alſo: and that he has carried on the ſame miſrepreſentation in this ſecond book, in which he ſpeaks of his external covenant, not as a mere unconditional grant, but as a mutual covenant between God and the viſible church, which is to be entered

tered into by us, and ſealed on our part; in order to which ſome qualifications are abſolutely neceſſary on our ſide, *viz.* That we "Come to a fixed reſolution to forſake all known ſin, and practiſe all known duty."---But I ſubmit it to the judgment of the judicious candid reader, whether the truth of the caſe is not this, that Mr. M. himſelf does not diſtinctly know what his external covenant is; and however ingenious he may be, yet it is beyond his abilities to give a conſiſtent account of this creature of his own imagination. For let his external covenant be conditional, or unconditional, it is merely a creature of his own imagination. For if it is conditional, the conditions of it are merely unholy, graceleſs duties; and ſo it is a graceleſs covenant, which is a 'graceleſs phantom,' as was proved in my former piece. And if it is unconditional, it wholly deſtroys the viſible church, as it leaves no mark of diſtinction between the church and the world. And *Philip* had no right to ſay, *If thou believeſt with all thine heart, thou mayeſt*; for believe, or not believe, he had an equal right to baptiſm. And ſo baptiſm muſt ceaſe to be an external badge of a chriſtian. Let a Pagan Indian, merely that he may be in the faſhion, demand baptiſm for himſelf and his children, and unqualified as he is, we have no right to refuſe him; for he has the ſame right to baptiſm as to hear the goſpel preached. But that the covenant with Abraham was really the covenant of grace, which Mr. M. owns is a conditional covenant, I have proved in my former piece. But let us hear Mr. M. ſpeak for himſelf.

SECTION II.

Mr. M's external covenant, repreſented by him as an unconditional covenant, examined in this view of it.

OUR author ſays, p. 59, 60, 61, 62. 'Whoever 'reads that covenant with Abraham, recorded 'Gen. 17. with attention, muſt unavoidably ſee' N. B.

—'That

—'That altho' the covenant of grace is ſet forth in it.' For he ſays, p. 57. 'the covenant of grace was contained 'in every diſpenſation of God to mankind; each of them 'contained promiſes of eternal ſalvation to believers.'— But to proceed.---'Yet, that covenant, as then made 'with Abraham was not ſtrictly the covenant of grace.' I grant, that beſides pardon, grace and glory, temporal good things were promiſed in that covenant. And ſo they are under the goſpel. Mat. 6. 33. But God's fatherly care of believers in the world is one of the bleſſings of the covenant of grace, in the ſtricteſt ſenſe. But this is not the thing. Mr. M. has reſpect to the nature of the promiſe, which being *unconditional* is inconſiſtent with the covenant of grace, and therefore cannot be reconciled to it, the bleſſings of which are promiſed only *conditionally, if we believe*; but the bleſſings of this covenant in Gen. 17. are promiſed unconditionally, *believe, or not believe.* For thus Mr. M. ſays, 'it has ſome 'peculiarities which are not RECONCILABLE with it.' And this appears from that 'chief promiſe contained in 'the covenant: *And I will eſtabliſh my covenant between 'me, and thee, and thy ſeed after thee, in their generations, for 'an everlaſting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy 'ſeed after thee.*' But pray, why is not this 'chief promiſe reconcilable' with the covenant of grace? This is the reaſon Mr. M. gives, becauſe 'this promiſe is as full, 'as expreſs, as abſolute and unconditional to his ſeed, as 'it was to Abraham.' Nay, but the apoſtle Paul, when preaching pure goſpel, ſaid to the jailor, *Believe on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and thou ſhall be ſaved, and thy houſe.* Act. 16. 30. So that the promiſe was as *full*, and *expreſs* to 'his ſeed, as it was to the jailor himſelf.'—But Mr. M. will ſay, that this promiſe to the jailor and his houſe was *conditional*; but the promiſe to Abraham and his ſeed was 'abſolute and unconditional.' And this being ſo, it not only is not the covenant of grace, but it cannot be 'reconciled' with it. I believe Mr. M's external covenant is in its very nature ſo inconſiſtent with the covenant of grace,

grace, that it cannot be 'reconciled' with it. But the whole Chriſtian world, the Anabaptiſts excepted, have till now thought, that the covenant with Abraham was the very covenant of grace itſelf. But it ſeems, it is ſo inconſiſtent with it, in Mr. M's view of it, as 'not to be *reconcilable* with it,' becauſe the covenant of grace promiſes the heavenly Canaan to us and to our ſeed, and that God will be a God to us and them conditionally, if we and they believe; but the covenant in Gen. 17. promiſed the earthly Canaan, and that God would be a God to Abraham and his ſeed 'unconditionally.'

But Mr. M. goes on.

'This difference between the tenor of the covenant of 'grace and the covenant with Abraham, could not eſ- 'cape the Dr's notice; but being reſolved to make out 'his ſcheme, he puts in a ſupplement into the covenant, 'which has not the leaſt countenance from the covenant 'itſelf, or from any other place in the bible. p. 65. *God 'ſpeaks to the pious parent in that ordinance (baptiſm) ſaying, 'I will be a God to thee, and to thy ſeed, i. e.* IF THEY WILL 'TAKE HEED TO WALK IN MY WAYS. This laſt con- 'ditional clauſe, is a mere arbitrary addition to the co- 'venant with Abraham, invented only for the ſake of 'making *that* reconcilable to the covenant of grace.— 'But no ſuch clauſe is ever once repreſented as belong- 'ing to the covenant of grace, or to the covenant with 'Abraham.' To which we reply, that,

The aſſembly of divines, in their *larger catechiſm*, ſay, that 'the covenant of grace was made with Chriſt as the ſe- 'cond Adam, and in him with all the elect, as his ſeed.' And yet in order to enjoy the bleſſings of this covenant it was neceſſary on Chriſt's part, that *he ſhould make his ſoul an offering for ſin.* And on our part, that we ſhould become Chriſt's ſeed by a true and living faith. If Chriſt had not died, or if we do not believe in him, God had not been obliged by covenant to make him *heir of all things*, or us to be *joint heirs with him.* So the covenant of grace, in a ſhadow, was made with Abraham, who was a type

of

of Chriſt, and with all his ſeed. And yet in order to enjoy the bleſſings of this covenant, it was neceſſary that Abraham ſhould renounce idolatry, and ſeperate himſelf from an idolatrous world, and *walk before God and be perfect*, in the ſenſe in which good men are ſaid in ſcripture to be *perfect*, Gen. 6. 4. Job 1. 1. And that he ſhould *command his children and his houſhold after him* to follow his example: This was neceſſary on Abraham's part. And it was neceſſary that his ſeed ſhould *keep the way of the Lord, to do juſtice and judgment; that the Lord MIGHT bring upon Abraham that which he had ſpoken.* Gen. 18. 19. If Abraham on the divine call had refuſed to leave *Ur of the Chalaees*, and to take Jehovah for his God; or had he afterwards returned to his native country and to his falſe gods, and perſiſted in idolatry, he would not have been made the *heir of the holy land*, the type of the heavenly inheritance. If his ſeed had finally refuſed to leave Egypt, and to give up the gods of Egypt, and to follow the Lord to the holy land, God would not have been obliged by covenant to give them the enjoyment of it. Therefore, altho' the covenant with Abraham, Gen. 17. was expreſſed in the form of an abſolute and unconditional promiſe, to him and to his ſeed; yet it is manifeſt that conditions were implied, both with reſpect to him, and to them.

And in this view of the Abrahamic covenant, as a conditional covenant, the divine conduct can be juſtified, in ſwearing, concerning that generation whoſe carcaſes fell in the wilderneſs, that they ſhould never *enter into his reſt*; becauſe they did not *believe his word*, nor *obey his voice*, as their father Abraham had done. *So they could not enter becauſe of unbelief.* Whereas had God been obliged, by an abſolute, unconditional promiſe, to bring them into the land of Canaan, he had been, what they were ready to charge him with, really guilty of *a breach of covenant.*

And in this view of the Abrahamic covenant, as a conditional covenant, the conduct of Moſes can be juſtified, in that ſpeech of his to the two tribes and half tribe,

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in Num. 32. 6---15. Wherein he expreſsly declares, that if *they ſhould turn away from the Lord*, as their fathers had done, whoſe carcaſes were fallen in the wilderneſs, they would be deſtroyed themſelves, and be the means of deſtroying all the congregation. *For if ye turn away from after him, he will yet again leave them in the wilderneſs, and ye ſhall deſtroy all this people.* Whereas had God been obliged, by an abſolute, unconditional promiſe, to bring them into the holy land, and put them in actual poſſeſſion of it, there could have been no more danger of their deſtruction, than there is that the earth will be deſtroyed by a ſecond general deluge, notwithſtanding God's covenant with *Noah*. Gen. 8. 11, 12. See alſo Deut. 7. 12.

And in this view of the Abrahamic covenant, as a conditional covenant, the divine conduct can be juſtified, in the preſent rejection of the ſeed of Abraham, who have been caſt off 1700 years, notwithſtanding God had ſaid, *I will eſtabliſh my covenant between me and thee, and thy ſeed after thee, for an EVERLASTING covenant*: For *becauſe of unbelief they were broken off*. For there is no ſtanding in God's church but by faith. As it is written, relative to the Gentile converts, who had been grafted into the good olive, *and thou ſtandeſt by faith*. Rom. 11. 20. For God might conſiſtently reject the ſeed of Abraham, if they refuſed to walk in the ſteps of Abraham, provided they were taken into covenant in this view. But if God had taken them *for better, for worſe*, without any proviſo, and abſolutely and unconditionally engaged to be their God, in an *everlaſting covenant*, ſo far as I am able to diſcern, he would have been obliged to keep them for his covenant people, notwithſtanding their rejecting the Meſſiah by unbelief.

But as Mr. M. is ſo confident, that the Abrahamic covenant was *abſolute* and *unconditional*, to him and to all his ſeed, and that all the bleſſings compriſed in that chief promiſe of it, *I will be a God to thee, and to thy ſeed*, were made ſure to them, without this 'conditional clauſe, *if they will take heed to walk in my ways*, which he ſays, 'is a

'mere

'mere arbitrary addition to the covenant with Abraham, 'invented only for the ſake of making that reconcilable 'with the covenant of grace.' Therefore it may not be amiſs to ſtop a few minutes, and take a view of ſome of the conſequences which will unavoidably follow from his notion of this covenant, and from his manner of reaſoning in ſupport of it.

1. If the covenant with Abraham is 'unconditional,' and ſo 'not reconcilable' with the covenant of grace; then the covenant of grace was not 'contained' in it; unleſs it 'contained' in it ſomething not 'reconcilable' with itſelf: i. e. unleſs two covenants were contained in that one covenant in their own nature ſo inconſiſtent, as not to be 'reconcilable' to each other. The Abrahamic covenant is 'abſolute and unconditional,' and therefore it is not the covenant of grace, ſays Mr. M. And he may as well ſay, *Therefore the covenant of grace is not implied in it at all*, nor in any ſenſe whatever 'ſet forth' in it. For nothing is 'contained,' or 'ſet forth' in it, which is neither expreſſed, nor implied. But the covenant of grace is neither expreſſed, nor implied; becauſe there is no condition expreſſed, nor implied. Thus Mr. M. has ſecluded, and wholly ſhut the covenant of grace out of the Abrahamic covenant. For to ſhut out all conditions, is to ſhut out all conditional covenants. But,

2. If the covenant of grace was not implied in that covenant with Abraham in Gen. 17. becauſe that implied no condition, but was abſolute and unconditional to him and to his ſeed; then for the ſame reaſon the covenant of grace was not implied in the covenant with Abraham in Gen. 12. and in Gen. 13. and in Gen. 15. For in each of theſe (which are all the) places, the promiſes are to Abraham and to his ſeed, and are delivered in the form of abſolute and unconditional promiſes, exactly, preciſely after the ſame tenor of the covenant in Gen. 17. Pray, reader, ſtop here, take your bible, turn to the cited chapters, and ſee with your own eyes. And when you have read theſe chapters, then,

3. Turn

3. Turn to the firſt promiſe made by God after the fall, Gen. 3. *The ſeed of the woman ſhall bruiſe the ſerpent's head.* And ſee, and conſider, that this alſo was in the form of an 'abſolute, unconditional' promiſe, and reſpected their poſterity as much as it did Adam and Eve. Therefore, by parity of reaſon, Mr. M. muſt ſay, that it was not the covenant of grace, nor 'reconcilable' to it. And

4. To ſay, that any conditions are implied, if Mr. M's way of reaſoning is juſt, 'is a mere arbitrary addition to the covenant' with Adam and with Abraham, 'invented only for the ſake of making it out,' that there ever was any covenant of grace at all, from the beginning of the world to the days of Abraham. For no 'conditional clauſe' is ever once expreſsly inſerted in the covenant with Adam or with Abraham, from the firſt revelation of it until that in Gen. 17. And therefore, if Mr. M's reaſoning is juſt, there was no covenant of grace exhibited in all this period of two thouſand years. And therefore,

5. As the covenant of grace, if theſe things are true, never had been revealed, from the beginning of the world to that tranſaction in Gen. 17. And as that was not the covenant of grace, nor 'reconcilable to it;' ſo circumciſion, which was appointed as a ſeal of that covenant in Gen. 17. and of no other, was not appointed to be a ſeal of the covenant of grace in any ſenſe whatever. For at that day, no covenant of grace had ever been exhibited. For every promiſe, which had been made to Adam, or to Abraham, was as abſolute and unconditional as that in Gen. 17. and reſpected their ſeed as much as themſelves. And therefore,

6. Circumciſion not being, in fact, in its original intention, a ſeal of the covenant of grace, the apoſtle Paul conſidering it as ſuch in Rom. 4. cannot make it ſuch: It is true, he calls it *a ſeal of the righteouſneſs of the faith*, and goes about to illuſtrate and confirm his doctrine of juſtification by faith, a doctrine peculiar to the covenant of grace, from God's diſpenſations to Abraham; and even goes ſo far, as to ſay in ſo many words, that *the goſpel*

was

was preached to Abraham; but if Mr. M. is right, in all this he was miſtaken. The covenant with Abraham was not the goſpel, was not the covenant of grace, nor indeed 'reconcilable to it.' Its ſeal, therefore, was not the ſeal of the covenant of grace: it was not *a ſeal of the righteouſneſs of the faith.* For the covenant of grace is 'conditional,' and 'wholly a perſonal affair;' but the covenant with Abraham was 'unconditional,' and made the 'ſeed joint-heirs with the parent.'—Therefore, if theſe things are ſo, it will follow,

7. That the viſible church originally was ſet up before any covenant of grace exiſted, upon a covenant 'of a different tenor,' and 'for a different purpoſe.' And as the viſible church is the ſame now, under the goſpel diſpenſation, as it was under the Abrahamic, it muſt be conſidered, as containing the ſame thing ſtill. A viſible church built on an external, unconditional covenant. And

8. As the viſible church is thus founded merely and only on this unconditional covenant, ſo no qualifications at all are requiſite in order to our being compleat members of it, in good ſtanding, even in the ſight of God. Yea, we may be taken in 'without our conſent,' even in adult age. And to uſe Mr. M's own words reſpecting the Iſraelites at Mount Sinai, in application to the whole Chriſtian world, Papiſts and Proteſtants, Arians, Pelagians, Socinians, Arminians, Antinomians, Drunkards, Adulterers, Thieves, Liars, &c. &c. p. 71. 'It is plain, God has proceeded to take us all into covenant, by mere ſovereignty, even as in his covenant with Abraham he included his infant ſeed,' no more reſpect being had to any qualification whatever, in the adult, than in infants of eight days old. And therefore,

9. All our churches in *New-England* are wrong, even every one of them, eſſentially wrong; and Mr. M's among the reſt, in obliging our people, even ſuch as have been baptiſed in infancy, to make a profeſſion of their faith, and to give their conſent to ſome covenant, or other, requiring either gracious, or graceleſs obedience:

for

for neither the one nor the other is requiſite to full communion in the viſible church, becauſe that is founded on an unconditional covenant, which requires no qualifications at all of the adult any more than of infants eight days old. And therefore,

10. As on this unconditional covenant no qualifications whatever are requiſite to a compleat ſtanding in the viſible church; ſo, by neceſſary conſequence, no crimes, how groſs ſoever, can conſtitutionally expoſe any one to excommunication, or to be debarred from church privileges. For, if any crime whatever could regularly expoſe one to excommunication, then a freedom, at leaſt, from that crime, would be a qualification abſolutely neceſſary in order to a compleat ſtanding in the viſible church; which would ſuppoſe, that the church was not founded on a covenant abſolutely unconditional.

If, therefore, we will come into Mr. M's external covenant, conſidered as an unconditional covenant, unleſs we are inconſiſtent with ourſelves, we muſt give in to all theſe neceſſary conſequences; and ſo excommunicate even excommunication itſelf out of the Chriſtian world, and fling open the doors of the church to all comers, how heretical and vicious ſoever they be.

But on the other hand, if we conſider the covenant with Abraham, in Gen. 17. as the covenant of grace, and ſo implying the conditions of that covenant, as St. Paul did, as was proved in my former piece, then not one difficulty will lie in our way. That objection relative to infants, and that relative to the Sinai covenant, and to the covenant in the plains of Moab were anſwered in my former piece, in ſect. vii. and nothing *new* is offered by Mr. M. but what is obviated at firſt ſight, only granting, a condition to be underſtood in the covenant, in Gen. 17, tho' not expreſſed. And we muſt be obliged to grant this, with reſpect to every exhibition of the covenant of grace, from the beginning of the world to that day, all which were delivered in the form of abſolute, unconditional promiſes: or elſe be driven to the dire neceſſity of ſay-

ing, that, from the beginning of the world, to that day' no covenant of grace had ever been revealed.

Thus we have finiſhed, what is needful, on Mr. M's external covenant, conſidered, as an unconditional covenant. Sould any ſay, that it is certain, that Mr. M. cannot intend, that his external covenant ſhould be an unconditional one. The reply is ready, viz. That it is certain, that no man can tell, by what he has publiſhed, what he does mean. But granting, he meant, as for my part, I underſtood him to mean, when I wrote my anſwer to his firſt book, that his external covenant ſhould be a conditional covenant; then the conditions are *gracious* or *graceleſs*. If *gracious*, then no graceleſs man, as ſuch, can be admitted into the viſible church. If *graceleſs*, then his external covenant is a *graceleſs covenant*. This is its nature, and by this name it ought to be called, to the end, its name may point out its nature, and diſtinguiſh it from every other covenant.

Indeed, it muſt be granted that every man has a right to give a name to his own child. And Mr. M. has given a name to his covenant; he has called it *the external covenant*: but perhaps on reconſideration he may think, that there is no propriety in giving it this name. (1.) Becauſe his covenant conſiſts not in *externals* only, but alſo in *internals*, viz. in 'a fixed reſolution' to forſake all known ſin, and practiſe all known duty. For 'a fixed reſolution' is an internal thing, as much as ſaving grace. (2.) Becauſe this name does not at all diſtinguiſh it, from the covenant of works, or covenant of grace, which are, both of them, external covenants, as much as is his covenant. But it is the deſign of different names, to diſtinguiſh things of different natures. The covenant of works was an external covenant, as it was adminiſtred to Adam, 'peculiarly worded to ſuit his circumſtances.' p. 67. There was no internal duty expreſsly required. The only ſin, expreſsly forbidden, was an external one, viz. *Of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou ſhalt not eat.* Eating is an external act; and this was the only action expreſsly

expreſsly mentioned in the covenant of works, as it was adminiſtered to Adam. There is therefore much more propriety, in calling that, an external covenant, than there is in calling Mr. M's covenant by this name. And ſo the covenant of grace, as it is adminiſtered in the goſpel, free from the ſhadows, rites and ceremonies of the old diſpenſation, is as external a covenant, as Mr. *Mather*'s. For it requires, that we not only *believe in our hearts*, but alſo *confeſs with our mouths*; that we not only *believe*, but alſo are *baptized*, and attend the Lord's ſupper, *doing this in remembrance of him*. Yea, the goſpel requires of profeſſors all external duties to God and man; and particularly, every external duty relative to church order, with much greater plainneſs than did the old teſtament; and even deſcends ſo low, as to require church-members to *work with their hands*. The name of an external covenant, therefore, is not at all adapted to diſtinguiſh Mr. M's covenant from the covenant of works, or from the covenant of grace. And yet what he means is really and eſſentially different from both. For they both require holineſs and nothing elſe, as qualifications to the enjoyment of the bleſſings promiſed in both. But this covenant requires no holineſs at all to qualify for the enjoyment of all its peculiar bleſſings. It requires, to this end, nothing but graceleſs duties. The name, therefore, of a graceleſs covenant is the moſt natural, expreſſive and diſtinguiſhing name in the world. Mr. M. ſeems to think, that it might do, to call it, by the name of '*the externals of the covenant of grace.*' But, I think, this name, by no means, will do. For the faith and obedience of the covenant of grace is a holy faith and obedience. In order therefore for any faith and obedience to be *the externals of the covenant of grace*, they muſt be, *profeſſedly and to appearance*, a holy faith and obedience. But the faith and obedience of Mr. M's covenant, requiſite to a title to all its bleſſings, are profeſſedly ſuch as a graceleſs man may have, which is profeſſedly a graceleſs faith and obedience. For he affirms that all unregenerate ſinners are

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'totally depraved.' Again, Mr. M. altho' in his former book, he had ſaid, p. 7. that 'after my moſt careful in-'quiry, I muſt own myſelf at a loſs in determining what 'they' (proteſtant divines in general) 'mean, by *being* '*under the external adminiſtration of the covenant of grace*:' yet now in his ſecond book, p. 61, he is even willing, if this would give content, to call his covenant, by the name of 'the external adminiſtration of the covenant of grace.' But this is a very improper name: for when he takes a man into the church, and adminiſters the covenant, the covenant which he adminiſters to the man, is not the covenant of grace, but profeſſedly 'a covenant diſtinct from the covenant of grace.' It ought, therefore, by no means to be called *the external adminiſtration of the covenant of grace*. However, it may, with no ſmall propriety be called, *the external adminiſtration of a graceleſs covenant.*

Objection. The external covenant ought not to be called a graceleſs covenant, becauſe it is deſigned as a means of the converſion of ſinners; and tends in its own nature to promote their converſion.

Anſwer. The external covenant in its own nature does not tend to promote the converſion of ſinners, but the contrary; for ſinners are never converted without conviction of ſin: for there can be no ſound converſion, without true reprentance. And there can be no true repentance without true conviction of ſin. But there can be no true conviction of ſin without a knowledge of the true rule of duty. And the law of God, which requires holineſs, and nothing but holineſs, is the only rule of duty, that God ever gave to man: by this, *law is the knowledge of ſin*: This *law is the ſchool-maſter*, which God has appointed *to bring us to Chriſt*. Now to ſend us to ſchool, to another ſchool maſter than that which God has appointed, tends not to our converſion, but to our deluſion. But Mr. M's external covenant is another ſchool-maſter than that which God has appointed, eſſentially different from it, and in its own nature inconſiſtent with it.

SECT.

SECTION, III.

The perfection of the divine law, and total depravity, inconsistent with the notion of an external covenant appointed by God for the unregenerate, as such, to enter into, requiring graceless qualifications, and nothing else, as the conditions of its blessings.

A LAW, which is a universal rule of life, to saints and to sinners, extending to the whole of our moral conduct, at all times, which forbids all sin, and requires us to be holy as God is holy, is inconsistent with any law, or rule, or covenant, which requires any sin, in matter, or manner, at any time, of any man, saint or sinner, on any pretence whatsoever. If, therefore, God has given such a holy law, as above, he cannot be the author of such an unholy covenant. For it is written, Jam. 3. 11. *Doth a fountain send forth, at the same place, sweet water and bitter?* And again, it is written, Jam. 1. 13. *Let no man say, when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man.* But for God to require sin, and bind his creatures by a most solemn covenant to sin, and promise them peculiar blessings if they will sin, in the manner his covenant requires, is tempting to sin, in a most powerful manner, with great and strong temptations.—But,

1. As to the *perfection of the divine law*, the assembly of divines at Westminster say, 'That the law is perfect, 'and bindeth every one to a full conformity in the whole 'man unto the righteousness thereof, and unto entire o-'bedience FOR EVER; so as to require the utmost per-'fection of every duty, and to forbid the least degree of 'every sin.' *Larger cat.* in answer to Q. 99, proved by Psal. 19. 7. Jam. 2. 10 Mat. 5. 21—48.

2. As to *total depravity*, they say, 'The sinfulness of 'that estate whereinto man fell, consisteth in the guilt of 'Adam's first sin, the want of that righteousness where-'in he was created, and the corruption of his nature; 'whereby he is utterly indisposed, disabled, and made

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'oppoſite unto all that is ſpiritually good: and wholly 'inclined to all evil, and that continually; which is 'commonly called original ſin, and from which do pro-'ceed all actual tranſgreſſions. Rom. 5. 12—19. Rom. '3. 10---19. Eph. 2. 1, 2, 3. Rom. 5. 6. Rom. 8. 7. '8. Gen. 6. 5. Jam. 1. 14, 15. Mat. 15. 19.' Anſw. to Q. 25.

As to the *doings of the unregenerate*, they ſay, 'Works 'done by unregenerate men, although for the matter of 'them, they may be things which God commands, and 'of good uſe both to themſelves and others; yet becauſe 'they proceeded not from a heart purified by faith, nor 'are done in a right manner according to the word, nor 'to a right end the glory of God, they are there-'fore ſinful, and cannot pleaſe God, or make a man 'meet to receive grace from God. And yet their ne-'glect of them is more ſinful and diſpleaſing to God. '1 Cor. 13 3. Iſa. 1. 12.' &c. *Conf. faith*, chap. 16. To which agree *the 39 articles of the Church of England*. 'Works done before the grace of Chriſt, and the inſpi-'ration of his ſpirit, are not pleaſant to God, &c.— 'Yea, rather, for that they are not done as God hath 'commanded and willed them to be done, we doubt not 'but that they have the nature of ſin.' *Article* 13. To which alſo agrees Mr. *Stoddard*. 'If men do not act from 'gracious motives and for gracious ends, they do not 'the thing that God commands; there is no obedience 'to God in what they do; they don't attend the will of 'God.' *Nature of converſion*, p. 7. Yea, he adds, p. 9. 'There is an *oppoſition between ſaving grace and common 'grace*. If one be oppoſite to the other, then they differ 'ſpecifically. Thoſe diſpoſitions that have contrariety 'one to the other, that are at war one with the other, 'and would deſtroy one another, are not of the ſame 'kind: And truly theſe are ſo. Common graces are 'luſts and do oppoſe ſaving grace.' So again in his *Safety*, (3d. edit.) p. 106. 'Man in his natural ſtate is *an 'enemy to this* (the goſpel) *way of ſalvation*. As man is

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'an enemy to the *law* of God, ſo to the *goſpel* of Jeſus 'Chriſt.' And in p. 146. 'All thoſe religious frames 'and diſpoſitions that are in natural men, are nothing 'elſe but the various ſhapings of ſelf-love.' And again, p. 148. 'Self-love is the very root of original ſin.' And again, p. 162. 'Every unhumbled ſinner is ſtriving a-'gainſt the work of humiliation: They are oppoſing of 'it, either by endeavours to ſet up a righteouſneſs of their 'own; ſeeking in that way to eſcape condemnation, in-'ſtead of yielding to God they are flying to their ſtrong 'holds, ſheltering themſelves in their prayers, reforma-'tions, deſires, &c. or elſe by wrangling, as a perſon 'purſued runs away till overtaken, and then he fights: 'So the ſinner when he ſees that he cannot ſave himſelf, 'is contending with God, objecting againſt divine pro-'ceedings, thinks that God's dealings are very hard mea-'ſure. Rom. 9. 19.' And p. 168. 'Their beſt works 'are not only ſinful, but properly *ſins*.' Thus far Mr. *Stoddard*. And thus we ſee what the 'old divinity' is, as to *the perfection of the divine law*, *total depravity*, and *works done by unregenerate men*.

Yea, Mr. M. himſelf, in words, at leaſt, grants each of theſe points. For, (1.) as to the *perfection of the divine law*, he ſets himſelf to prove, p. 27. 'that the law is not 'abated.'—'And therefore nothing ſhort of perfection 'may be looked upon as *the whole of what is required*.' And (2.) as to *total depravity*, he repeatedly aſſerts it thro' ſect. 2 and 3, and particularly ſays, p. 8. 'That Adam 'did totally deprave his nature, by his firſt ſin, and *whol-'ly loſt the moral image of God* in which he was created.' And he ſays, p. 18. 'Mankind at this day, antecedent to 'their exerciſing faith in Chriſt, are in much the ſame 'condition as Adam was, after he had ſinned.'—'The 'unregenerate ſinner—is in the likeneſs of fallen Adam.' And he ſpeaks of them, p. 52. as 'ſuch whoſe hearts 'are in a ſtate of enmity againſt God.' And (3) as to *the doings of the unregenerate*, he ſays, p. 17. 'As love to 'God is the leading principle of all acceptable obedience;

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'so, Adam having rendered himself incapable of loving 'God, he was of course, incapable of yielding any truly 'holy and acceptable obedience to the will of God.' And p. 55. 'Sinners under conviction—really aim—to 'establish their own righteousness which is of the law.' Which, no doubt, he will grant is a very wicked thing, being the great sin of the unbelieving Jews, for which, among other things, they were finally cast off by God. Rom. 9. 32. Now, therefore,

1. The question is not, whether all the holy commands of God's law, and holy exhortations of the gospel, are given to the unregenerate, and binding on them; so as that they are wholly inexcusable, and altogether criminal, in every neglect. This I affirm to be the truth. And this Mr. M. grants.

2. The question is not, whether the unregenerate do, in any one instance, perform one act of holy obedience, i. e. of obedience, which has the least degree of holiness in it. Mr. M. allows they do not: for he asserts, that they are 'totally depraved,' thro' sect. 2 and 3.

3. The question is not, Whether the law is at all abated, as to the unregenerate, so as to cease requiring them to perform every duty in a holy manner. For Mr. M. insists upon it, that 'the law is not abated." p. 27. Yea, he 'asserts, that whatever God commands to be done, he requires the 'performance to be, not in a gracious, but in a *perfect manner*.' p. 38.

4. The question is not whether a sinful manner of attending on the means, which God useth for the conversion of sinners, may not be less sinful and less dangerous, than a total neglect. This is granted. And therefore,

5. The question, and the only question is, whether a sinful manner is not sinful? Or in other words, whether the sinful manner itself, is required? and so is strictly speaking, a DUTY. In this we differ. And accordingly Mr. M. considers this, as a fundamental error, in my former piece. p. 35. 'That God requires holiness, and nothing but holiness.'—The argument then stands thus,

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To require the unregenerate to perform duties in a ſinful manner, is to require them to break God's law: But Mr. M's external covenant requires the unregenerate to perform duties in a ſinful manner: therefore Mr. M's external covenant requires men to break God's law.

That covenant which requires men to break God's law is not from God: But this external covenant requires men to break God's law: therefore it is not from God.*

There are but three ways to get rid of this argument, either, (1) to deny the perfection of the divine law, or (2) to deny total depravity, or (3) to be inconſiſtent. The church of *Scotland*, and the churches in *New-England*, in their public formulas, not chooſing to take either of theſe ways, were neceſſitated to leave Mr. M's external covenant out of their ſcheme of religion, and to affirm 'that ſacraments are holy ſigns and ſeals of the covenant of grace.' But each of theſe three ways, to get rid of this argument, and to eſtabliſh the external covenant, Mr. M. has taken. For,

1. To this end, p. 35, he denies the perfection of the divine law, viz. 'That God requires holineſs, and nothing but holineſs.' And that,

2. In expreſs contradiction to himſelf: For, p. 34. he ſays, 'I aſſert, that whatever God commands to be 'done, he requires the performance of it to be, not in a 'gracious, but in a perfect manner.' Which is evidently to require 'holineſs and nothing but holineſs.' For a perfect manner of performing every duty, perfectly excludes

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* If God's law requires holineſs, and nothing but holineſs, the apoſtle's words are ſtrictly true. Rom. 8, 7. The totally depraved, are *not ſubject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.* But as the external covenant is of a nature oppoſite to the law of God, and ſuited to the carnal mind, as it requires graceleſs, unholy, ſinful duties; therefore the totally depraved, as ſuch, *may be ſubject to it.* And ſo the carnal mind, which is totally oppoſite to God's law, may be in conformity to the external covenant; and likewiſe lays a foundation for love. And therefore the carnal mind naturally loves the external covenant. And what we love, we wiſh to be true.

eludes all ſin. And if God requires this 'perfect manner,' he does, by ſo doing, forbid the contrary. Every imperfection, therefore, is forbidden. And accordingly, he ſays, p. 28. That 'the imperfections found in believers are ſinful.' Surely then, the total depravity found in unbelievers, is ſinful alſo; and yet he pleads, p. 33. *That if God, conſiſtent with the law of perfection, may require the imperfect obedience of the believer, he may alſo require ſuch doings, endeavours and ſtrivings, as take place in ſinners, while unregenerate, and entirely deſtitute of holineſs.* Now, I readily grant, that if God may conſiſtently require the imperfections of believers, which are ſinful; he may alſo require the unregenerate to ſeek and ſtrive, in that ſinful manner, in which they do. For if he may conſiſtently require ſin, in the one, he may in the other alſo. But Mr. M. tells me, that God forbids ſin in both; for he ſays, 'I aſſert, that whatever God commands to be done, 'he requires the performance to be, not in a gracious, 'but in a *perfect manner*.' Which forbids the imperfections of the believer, and the total ſinfulneſs of the 'totally depraved.' Inconſiſtencies of this kind, good as his natural genius is, run thro' his book, whenever he has occaſion to ſpeak on this ſubject: and he brings many texts of ſcripture to keep himſelf in countenance: as if it were poſſible, that a book inſpired by God, ſhould contain ſuch inconſiſtencies. Whereas, could it be proved, that the bible ever required any ſin, or any action to be done in a ſinful manner, it would be ſuch an argument, that it did not come from him, who is perfectly and unchangeably holy, and who does, and who cannot but hate ſin, even all ſin, at all times, and in all perſons, with perfect hatred, that I ſhould not know how to anſwer it. For it looks like the moſt glaring contradiction in nature, that God ſhould command, call, invite, urge, perſuade, and beſeech us to do, what he perfectly hates. And to ſay, that the true and living God, does not perfectly hate all ſin, at all times, is, as all will grant,

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wickedly to reproach the Holy One of Iſrael. Pſa. 50. 21. *Thou thoughteſt I was altogether ſuch a one as thyſelf: but I will reprove thee, and ſet* thy ſins *in order before thee.*

The Phariſees took great pains in religion, they *faſted twice in the week.* And they thought they performed their duties, in the manner, in which, GOD required. *All theſe things have I done from my youth up. Lo, theſe many years do I ſerve thee, neither tranſgreſſed I at any time thy commandment.* For if the law required them to do duties in the manner in which they did, then, in doing as they did, they did their duty. So they were not ſinners, in their own view; rather, they were *righteous*, and *needed no repentance.* For they had nothing to repent of. For they had 'forſaken all known ſin, and practiſed all known duty.' So that their conſciences acquitted them. *As touching the righteouſneſs of the law, I was blameleſs.* It was impoſſible they ſhould be brought to repentance, while they viewed things in this light. It was almoſt impoſſible to beat them out of their ſcheme. Therefore publicans and harlots ſtood a better chance for converſion than they did, as our Saviour declares. Mat. 21. 31, 32. * For altho' the ſtrivings of an awakened ſinner, with the law of perfection in his view, may 'be uſeful to promote conviction of ſin;' yet the ſtrivings of a ſinner, with a law in view, which requires him to do as he does, inſtead of being 'uſeful to promote conviction of ſin,' tends to eſtabliſh him on his own righteouſneſs. For in doing, as he does, he does 'all known duty,' and ſo is *blameleſs*: and ſo is *righteous*, and ſo *needs no repentance*, no atonement, no pardon, no Chriſt, no grace, and

* 'But this is, I think a great miſtake,' ſaith a late writer, 'they 'were not Phariſees that theſe words were ſpoken to, but Sadducees.' Referring to Mat. 21. 31. But, it is plain, from ver. 45, that the Phariſees thought themſelves to be the men, and that they were not miſtaken. For, the Evangeliſt ſaith, *and when the chief Prieſts and Phariſees had heard his Parables, they perceived that he ſpake of them.* Read from ver. 28 to 45.

and *if righteouſneſs come by the law, then Chriſt is dead in vain.* So this ſcheme iſſues at laſt in infidelity.

Our author ſays, p. 52. 'God has repeatedly commanded ſinners to conſider their ways,'—Very true, ſo he has. But has God ever once commanded them to conſider their ways, in an impenitent, ſelf-righteous, ſelf-juſtifying, Chriſt-rejecting manner! In which manner ſinners always do conſider their ways, ſo long as they remain under the reigning power of an impenitent, ſelf-righteous, ſelf-juſtifying, Chriſt-rejecting ſpirit: i. e. ſo long as they remain unregenerate. For, *in this ſpirit unregeneracy conſiſts.* But as ſoon as ever ſinners begin to conſider their ways, in a penitent, ſelf-condemning, God-juſtifying, Chriſt-prizing manner, they really begin to comply with 'the repeated commands, to conſider their ways,' which God has given to ſinners. And theſe ſinners are now not unregenerate, but regenerate. Thus holy David did. Pſal. 119. 56. *I thought upon my ways, and turned my feet unto thy teſtimonies.* And theſe are they, Mat. 11. 12. Who *take the kingdom of heaven by force.* For the great truths of the goſpel viewed, as ſuch ſinners view them, will always be attended with anſwerable effects. Mat. 13. 23. *But he that received ſeed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and underſtandeth it, which alſo beareth fruit.* But *ſtony* and *thorny ground* hearers bring forth no fruit. While the *vail is on the heart*, the goſpel produces no fruit, but when the *vail is taken away*, then divine truths are ſeen in their GLORY, and then every anſwerable affection is BEGOTTEN. 2 Cor. 3. 15.---18. But every unregenerate ſinner is blind to the holy beauty of Chriſt's holy religion. For as Mr. *Stoddard* ſays, 'as man is an enemy to the *law* of God, ſo to the *goſpel* of Jeſus Chriſt.' Therefore as St. Paul ſays, 2 Cor. 2. 14. *The natural man receiveth not the things of the ſpirit of God: for they are fooliſhneſs unto him; neither* CAN HE KNOW *them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned.* Therefore Chriſt told *Nicodemus*, Joh. 3. *Except a man be born again he*

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CANNOT SEE *the kingdom of God*: i. e. cannot underſtand and embrace chriſtianity. Theſe, then, are the men, who *take the kingdom of heaven by force*, and not they whom Mr. M. deſcribes, as 'going about to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs which is of the law,' who, as he rightly obſerves, 'never do accompliſh what they aim at.' See p. 54, 55.

But is it not indeed ſurprizing, that Mr. M. ſhould, (p. 52.) urge thoſe words of the apoſtle, as an exhortation to impenitent, Chriſt-rejecting ſtrivings, ſuch as are all the ſtrivings of impenitent, Chriſtleſs ſinners, in 2 Cor. 5. 20. *As tho' God did beſeech you by us, we pray you in Chriſt's ſtead, be ye reconciled to God?* For, the apoſtle's exhortation is, *be ye reconciled to God*: and his argument is, God is now ready thro' Chriſt to be reconciled to you. Now, ſuppoſing this exhortation was given to the unregenerate, as Mr. M. would have it; if they believed that God was ready to be reconciled thro' Chriſt: i. e. if they believed the goſpel to be true, why ſhould they not return home to God immediately, as the prodigal ſon did to his father, as ſoon as ever he came to himſelf? But Mr. M. would have them, inſtead of returning to God now, in compliance with the apoſtle's exhortation; rather put it off a while, and ſtrive 'to obtain thoſe diſcoveries of God thro' Chriſt, by which they would be reconciled to God.' p. 53. Nay, but the apoſtle had juſt made all thoſe 'diſcoveries' to them, which are contained in the goſpel on that ſubject. And adds, *Behold now is the accepted time! now is the day of ſalvation!* And if they had no prejudice againſt the truth, why ſhould they not receive it, at firſt hearing? And if they believed him, what could hinder their immediate return to God, unleſs they were at heart utterly diſinclined to a reconciliation to him, let him be ever ſo willing on his part? And if they were utterly diſinclined to a reconciliation to God in their hearts, none of their ſtrivings could be conſidered, as being of the nature of a compliance with that ex-

exhortation, *be ye reconciled to God.* But if they were ſo prejudiced againſt the truth, as not to receive it, when clearly held forth before them, by an inſpired apoſtle, how could they be ſaid to 'ſtrive to diſcover' it? For a man does not ſtrive to diſcover, what he ſhuts his eyes againſt, when held up clearly before him. And ſo long as this diſinclination to God and the truth remains total in a ſinner, it is of the nature of a total rejection of the divine exhortation, *be ye reconciled to God.* And as ſoon as the leaſt degree of love to God takes place in the heart, the ſinner can no longer be conſidered as unregenerate, if the unregenerate are 'totally depraved,' as Mr. M. ſays they are. *

But Mr. M. ſuppoſes, p. 54. that Act. 8. 9. will be to his purpoſe. *And the people with one accord gave heed unto thoſe things which Philip ſpake, hearing and ſeeing the miracles which he did.* True, they did ſo, and what was the conſequence? Our bleſſed Saviour, who knows all things, tells us, viz. That every one, who, *with a good and honeſt heart*, heard the word, did underſtand it, and bring forth fruit, while ſtony and thorny ground hearers fell away. Luk. 8. Now, the queſtion is this, Was it not the duty of every one of them to have a good and honeſt heart, and ſo to hear with a good and honeſt heart the firſt time? Yes, ſays Mr. M. for 'I aſſert, that whatever God commands to be done, he requires the performance to be in a perfect manner.' But what then are theſe texts to his purpoſe, and a thouſand more ſuch like? For there are a thouſand in the bible, as much to his puropoſe as theſe.

3. But the bottom of the buſineſs with Mr. M. is this, that altho' in words, he ſays, that the unregenerate are 'totally depraved;' yet he does not ſeem rightly to underſtand the ſcripture doctrine of total depravity, as held

* See the *Nature of ſpiritual blindneſs* conſidered. *Eſſay on the nature and glory of the goſpel*, ſect. x.

held forth in our confeſſion of faith: but really to ſuppoſe, that unregenerate ſinners, are naturally inclined, while unregenerate to love God, even God's true and real character, as revealed in the goſpel; ſo that as ſoon as ever they 'diſcover' what that character is, they will love it, even *without any new principle of grace*, even as naturally as Jacob loved Rachel the firſt time he ſaw her. But as to that character of God, which is revealed in the law, he ſuppoſes, that ſinners, never can, and never will love it: becauſe, 'to love it is the ſame thing' as to love their own miſery.' But as to the character of God, which is revealed in the goſpel, they need *no new principle of grace*, in order to love it, any more than Jacob needed a new principle, in order to love Rachel. p. 43---48. And this being ſuppoſed, awakened ſinners may, from natural principles, long and moſt earneſtly deſire to 'diſcover' this new character of God which is exhibited in the goſpel; and ſo ſeek after this 'diſcovery' with proper, direct deſires after it, for itſelf. And theſe deſires he, therefore, conſiders, as being in nature, kind and tendency, the ſame with what he calls the gracious deſire of thoſe whom he eſteems regenerate. Theſe ſeekings and ſtrivings he, therefore ſuppoſes to be required, in the ſame ſenſe, and for the ſame purpoſe, as the ſeekings and ſtrivings of the true ſaint. p. 33, 34. To eſtabliſh theſe ſentiments, is one chief deſign of his book. And thus far, I fully agree with him, that there is no difference in kind, between the religious exerciſes of the unregenerate, and the religious exerciſes of his regenerate man. And in this view, I wonder not at his zeal againſt this fundamental ſentiment of *a ſpecific difference*, as clearly held forth in Preſident *Edwards's treatiſe concerning religious affections*. p. 36, 37, 38, 39, 40. For his regenerate man has profeſſedly no *new principle of grace*. And accordingly he appears, in fact, to have no more grace than his unregenerate man has. For he is as great an

enemy

enemy to God's law, and to the holy nature of God, therein exhibited, as the unregenerate. p. 41, 42, 43. And the God he loves is profeſſedly of a different character, even of a character ſo different, that the unregenerate will naturally love it, as ſoon as they 'diſcover' it, and its favourable aſpect towards them, *without any new principle of grace.* p. 43. 44—48. And this is the true reaſon, 'ninety-nine in a hundred' of his regenerate men are ſo at a loſs about their good eſtate, that they cannot ſee their way clear, to make a profeſſion of Godlineſs. p. 79, 80. Which renders his external covenant as neceſſary for them, as for the unregenerate; for if the door is not opened wide enough, to take in the unregenerate, as ſuch, his regenerate man cannot with a good conſcience, come into the viſible church. For as Mr. *Stoddard*, in order to prove the doctrine of the *ſpecific difference between common and ſaving grace*, rightly obſerves, in his *Nature of ſaving converſion*, p. 8. 'If 'the difference between ſaving grace and common, lay 'in the degree, *no man could judge that his grace is ſaving.*' And thus he goes on to reaſon, 'Men may know 'that they have ſaving grace, 1 Joh. 3 14. 2 Cor. 7. '10. But if the difference lay in the degree, how ſhould 'man go about to determine that their grace was ſaving? the man may know that he has a greater degree of confidence, ſorrow, and zeal than formerly 'he had; he may have reaſon to think that he goeth 'beyond ſome other profeſſors in theſe things; but 'upon what foundation can he determine that he hath 'them in ſuch a degree as to ſecure his ſalvation? 'Where has God revealed what degree is ſaving, and what 'is not ſaving? What warrant has any man to judge himſelf in a ſafe condition, if there be ſeveral degrees of grace 'that are not ſaving? What rule can any miniſter lay 'down to guide men in this matter? Men muſt needs 'be left in a *perpetual uncertainty*, and *remain in the dark*, '*about their eternal ſtate*,' Thus far Mr. *Stoddard*. But

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of theſe things more hereafter, when we come to conſider the *new ſcheme of religion*, which Mr. M. has advanced, in order to ſupport his external covenant.

SECTION IV.

Iſai. xlv. 19. *I ſaid not unto the ſeed of Jacob, ſeek ye me in vain.*

Mat. vii. 7. *Aſk, and it ſhall be given you: Seek, and ye ſhall find.*

A view of the exhortations, and promiſes of the goſpel: and the true reaſon pointed out why the doings of the unregenerate do not entitle to the bleſſings promiſed.

OUR author, p. 34, ſays, 'If it ſhould be aſked, 'whether there are any promiſes of ſalvation to 'theſe endeavours of the unregenerate; I readily anſwer, 'there are none. The abſolute authority of God is 'not ſuch a limited thing, that he can lay no com-'mands upon his creatures, without adding a promiſe 'to the performance: divine Sovereignty is not incum-'bered with ſuch a tether.' Theſe words have led me to take a view of the divine exhortations and promiſes thro' the old and new-teſtament, a few of which may be tranſcribed.

Exhortations to Sinners.	Promises annexed.
Lev. 6. 2—6. *If a ſoul ſin---he ſhall reſtore--he ſhall bring his treſpaſs-offering unto the Lord--the Prieſt ſhall make an atonement for him,* &c.	Lev. 6. 7. *And it ſhall be forgiven him.*
Lev. 26. 40, 41. *If they ſhall confeſs their iniquity---if then there uncircumciſed hearts be humbled, & they then accept the puniſhment of their iniquity:*	Lev. 26. 42. *Then I will remember my covenant with Jacob, and alſo my covenat with Iſaac, and alſo my covenant with Abraham, will I remember; and I will remember the land.*
1 K. 8. 47, 48. *If they ſhall bethink themſelves, and repent, & make ſupplication unto thee--and ſo return unto thee with all their heart--and pray unto thee toward--the houſe which I have built for thy name;*	1 King. 8. 49 *Then hear thou their prayer---in heaven thy dwelling place---and forgive thy people,* &c.
Prov. 1. 23. *Turn you at my reproof:*	Prov. 1. 23. *Behold, I will pour out my Spirit unto you.*
Prov. 2. 3, 4. *If thou crieſt after knowledge, and lifteſt up thy voice for underſtanding: if thou ſeekeſt her as ſilver, and ſearcheſt for her, as for hid treaſures:*	Prov. 2. 5. *Then ſhalt thou underſtand the fear of the Lord; and find the knowledge of God.*
Prov. 28. 13. *Whoſo confeſſeth and forſaketh them,* i. e. his ſins,	Prov. 28. 13. *Shall find mercy.*

Iſai.

EXHORTATIONS to SINNERS.	PROMISES annexed.
Iſai. 55. 6. *Seek ye the Lord, while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near.*	Iſai. 45. 19. *I ſaid not to the houſe of Jacob, ſeek ye me in vain.*
Ver. 7. *Let the wicked forſake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord,*	Iſai. 55. 7. *And he will have mercy on him, and to our God, and he will abundantly pardon.*
Mat. 7. 7. *Aſk—*	Mat. 7. 7. *And it ſhall be given you.*
—*Seek—*	Mat. 7. 7. *And ye ſhall find.*
—*Knock—*	---- *And it ſhall be opened unto you.*
Mat. 7. 8. *For every one that aſketh - - -*	Mat. 7. 8. *Recieveth.*
—*and he that ſeeketh,*	---- *findeth.*
—*and to him that knocketh*	---- *it ſhall be opened.*
Luk. 18. 14. *He that humbleth himſelf, - - - -*	Luk. 18. 14. *Shall be exalted.*
Mar. 16, 16. *He that believeth and is baptized,*	Mark 16. 16. *Shall be ſaved.*
Act. 3. 9. *Repent & be converted*	Act. 3. 19. *That your ſins may be blotted out.*

Theſe texts are a true ſpecimen of the whole tenor of the ſacred writings on this ſubject, and let the candid reader

reader ſtop, and look over them two, or three times, and conſider and think for himſelf; and theſe and ſuch like remarks will riſe in his mind of themſelves; or, at the leaſt, the truth of them will appear plain, as ſoon as mentioned.

1. There are directions given to ſinners, in the holy ſcriptures, in and by which, a full anſwer is given to that queſtion, *what ſhall we do to be ſaved?* and beyond diſpute, it is their duty and intereſt to follow GOD's directions, immediately, and without the leaſt delay. *

2. There are promiſes made to ſinners, without exception, entitling them to all the bleſſings of the goſpel, upon their complying with God's directions.

3. Theſe promiſes are not of the nature of general encouragements, rendering it hopeful, yet leaving it uncertain, whether ſinners ſhould obtain, if they comply with the directions given them by God: but they are as plain, full and expreſs promiſes, as any in the bible, and do eſtabliſh a certain and univerſal connection, thus, *Whoſo confeſſeth and forſaketh his ſins ſhall have mercy.* This promiſe extends univerſally to all who *confeſs and forſake their*

* Q. If a full anſwer is given to that queſtion by God himſelf, why do awakened ſinners continue to repeat it? Why do they ſtill ſay, *What ſhall we do to be ſaved?* If God has anſwered the queſtion, why are they at a loſs?

A. God's anſwer does not ſuit their hearts, and ſo they are deaf to it. God ſpeaks, and ſpeaks plain enough, but they do not hear. God cries, *Hear, and your ſoul ſhall live* —They have ears, but they are *uncircumciſed*, Pagan ears; and ſo *in hearing, they hear not, neither do they underſtand.* For every *good and honeſt heart bears the word, underſtands it, and brings forth fruit.* Their deafneſs and blindneſs is wholly of a criminal nature. Thus, when the famine came, the prodigal ſon cried, What ſhall I do? The right anſwer was plain and eaſy to a good and honeſt heart. But he hated to go home. For as yet his heart was oppoſite to it: Therefore he ſaid, 'I will go and join myſelf to a citizen of that country, and feed his ſwine.' *But when he came to himſelf*, he inſtantly felt it thro' and thro' his heart, that it was his preſent duty and intereſt, immediately, to *ariſe and go to his father.* And nothing but the vicious ſtate of his heart prevented him knowing this before.

their ſins; and eſtabliſhes a certain connection, *they ſhall have mercy*. But that there never was one who failed, and never will be one who will fail, who complies with God's directions, is evident from the teſtimony of him, who came from the Father's boſom, and knew the mind of God, and came into this world, to reveal it unto us. For he ſays, not only *Aſk, and it ſhall be given you*; but he adds, *For every one that aſketh, receiveth*. From which we have as full evidence, as we have that Jeſus is the Son of God, that there never was, and never will be one ſingle inſtance among mankind, who, according to this direction, ever did *aſk*, or ever will *aſk*, for the bleſſings of the goſpel, and fail of receiving: *For every one that aſketh receiveth*. So again, *Hear and your Soul ſhall live*; *Look unto me, and be ye ſaved all ye ends of the earth*; *Whoſoever will, let him come*; *Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wiſe caſt out*, &c. &c. &c. all prove the ſame point.—Beſides all this, and that which, confirms the point ſtill farther, is, that deſtruction is threatened *only* to thoſe who refuſe to hearken to God's directions. Prov. 1. 24, 25. *Becauſe I have called and ye refuſed, I have ſtretched out my hand and no man regarded; but ye have ſet at nought all my counſel and would none of my reproof: I alſo will laugh at your calamity*. But on the other hand, ver. 23. *Turn at my reproof, and I will pour out my ſpirit unto you*.——And,

4. Theſe promiſes do eſtabliſh a certain connection between the firſt act of compliance with theſe directions, and the bleſſings of the goſpel. Indeed where one act of compliance takes place, ſinners will continue in a courſe of compliance. As for example. When the prodigal ſon returned home to his father, he was upon the firſt act, upon his firſt return, received as a child, and entitled to all the privileges of ſuch. But then it is equally true, he never left his father's houſe and turned prodigal again, as he had done before; but on the contrary, he brought forth fruit meet for repentance. And as he was thus received on his firſt return, ſo it is in all inſtances. For *whoſo confeſſeth and forſaketh his ſins ſhall have mercy*.

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And again, *Aſk, and it ſhall be given you; for every one that aſketh receiveth.* If the firſt act of compliance with theſe directions ſhould not entitle to the bleſſings promiſed, by parity of reaſon, the ſecond act of compliance might not entitle. And ſo it might come to paſs, that ſome who comply with God's directions, might fail of the bleſſings promiſed, contrary to the plain tenor of all the promiſes. See Joh. 4. 14. and 5. 24. Mat. 10. 42. Act. 2. 38. and 16. 31. Eph. 1. 13, 14. Phil. 1. 6.

5. Theſe promiſes make it certain, that among all the unpardoned ſinners in the world, whatever pains they have, any of them, taken in religion, yet there is not one, who ever, in any one ſingle act did comply with God's directions. For had they complied, they would have been pardoned. For God himſelf has ſaid it: *Let the wicked forſake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy on him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.* And our bleſſed Saviour, in his ſermon on the Mount, directs us to pray for pardon. *When ye pray, ſay——Forgive us our debts.* And then ſoon declares, *Aſk, and it ſhall be given you.* And then to put his meaning for ever beyond diſpute, he adds, *For every one that aſketh receiveth.* He, therefore, whoſe ſins are not pardoned, never yet, in the whole courſe of his life, did, ſo much as once, confeſs and forſake them, and aſk God to forgive him, according to divine direction: no not once. To diſbelieve this point, is, in effect, to diſbelieve the whole of divine revelation. For he that believeth not this, hath *made God a liar.*——

Now if theſe things are true, we may hence learn,

1. That Mr. *Sandeman*'s ſcheme, relative to directions to be given to ſinners, is not agreeable to the word of God. For he ſays, 'Let all the prophets and apoſtles be conſulted upon the queſtion, what is required of us in order to acceptance with God? we ſhall find their unanimous reply to be, *every* thing, or *nothing*.' For, according to Mr. *Sandeman*, the ſinner is pardoned before repentance, and faith is not an *act*, but a mere *paſ-*

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ſive thing. So, therefore, 'nothing' is to be done by the ſinner, in order to pardon and juſtification. For no volition, act, or exerciſe of mind whatever is needful in order to it. And ſo, no direction at all is to be given. For Mr. *Sandeman* ſpeaking of the atonement, ſays, 'All 'its true friends will join in affirming, that Chriſt came 'to render *impenitent ſinners accepted unto everlaſting life*, by 'the works which he himſelf wrought, and thus by the '*diſcovery of preventing goodneſs, to lead them to repentance.*' —Thus they are *regenerated by light*, according to Mr. *Sandeman*.—But, from what has been ſaid, nothing can be plainer, than that both the old teſtament and the new, do give directions to ſinners, to do ſomething. Thus when thoſe, who were *pricked at the heart* on the day of Pentecoſt, aſked *Peter* and the reſt of the apoſtles, ſaying, *Men and brethren, what ſhall we do? Peter* did not ſay, 'be perfect;' nor did he ſay, 'do nothing:' but he ſaid, *Repent and be baptized in the name of the Lord Jeſus for the remiſſion of ſins.* So again, a few days after, *Repent and be converted, that your ſins may be blotted out.* And when the trembling jailer put the queſtion to the apoſtle Paul, *What ſhall I do to be ſaved?* his anſwer was, *Believe on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and thou ſhalt be ſaved.* To ſay, therefore, that there is 'nothing' to be done in order to ſalvation, and ſo no directions to be given to ſinners, is directly contrary to the holy ſcriptures.

Mr. *Sandeman*'s ſcheme, in a few words, is this: That we are to give inſtruction to the unregenerate, but no exhortation at all. We are to hold up the truth to their view, with its evidence, that it may ſtrike their minds, give them hope, and beget love. For regeneration is wrought by light, and is the effect and fruit of faith. But no call, no invitation, no direction, no exhortation is to be given; becauſe no volition is to take place before juſtification. For the ſingle belief of the ſimple truth, in which ſimple belief no volition is implied, is the only thing implied in that faith by which we are juſtified. But no means can be proper to be uſed for the productiſ-

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on of this faith, but merely holding up the ſimple truth, with its evidence to view. This, therefore, is the whole the preacher has to do. And the truth, as ſoon as known, gives hope, and ſo begets love to itſelf. Juſt as the news of a large importation of corn, in an iſland periſhing with famine, as it ſpreads thro' the iſland, gains credit, gives hope of relief, and begets love to that which is to relieve them. And all Godlineſs conſiſts in love to that which relieves us.---This is Mr. *Sandeman*'s ſcheme.---N. B. (1.) he has the ſame notion of total depravity and regeneration, with Mr. M. viz. That the carnal heart is at enmity only againſt that character of God, which is exhibited in the law: but as to that character, which is revealed in the goſpel, the carnal, unregenerate heart is diſpoſed to love it, as ſoon as known. Juſt as the news of the importation of corn, in ſuch a famiſhed iſland, will be agreeable to every inhabitant, who hears it, and underſtands it. (2.) In both Mr. *Sandeman*'s and Mr. *Mather*'s ſcheme, we need no *new principle of grace*, in order to love God, any more than the famiſhed inhabitants of the iſland, needed new ſtomachs, in order to love bread. And therefore (3.) the regenerating, ſanctifying, influences of the holy Spirit, on both ſchemes, are abſolutely needleſs. For, (4.) as we are not to be reconciled to that character of God, againſt which we are at enmity, but only to a character, which is ſo agreeable to our hearts, in our natural ſtate, that it will beget love to itſelf, as ſoon as known, on which account we need no new principle of grace, in order to love it; ſo, for the ſame reaſon, the regenerating, ſanctifying influences of the Spirit, are needleſs. Even as it was with *Jacob*, when he went to *Padan-aram*, to get a wife; the ſtate of his mind being ſuch by nature, that he would love *Rachel*, as ſoon as ſeen, he therefore needed no ſupernatural influence to diſpoſe his heart to love her. (5.) On both ſchemes the ſinner is pardoned before repentance. For he believes, firſt; then he is juſtified; and

then

then he hopes; and then he is regenerated, and loves; and then he repents. But to return,

2. From what has been ſaid, we may alſo ſee, that Mr. *Mather* is equally miſtaken, in inſinuating, that ſinners may comply with the exhortations and directions of God to ſinners, and yet be entitled to no promiſe. For God has, as we have ſeen, in the moſt plain and expreſs manner, annexed promiſes to his exhortations and directions. Our author ſays, 'The abſolute 'authority of God, is not ſuch a limited thing, that he 'can lay no commands upon his creatures, without 'adding a promiſe to the performance.' But the creed of even all the ancient patriarchs, ſhort as it was, had this for one article, that God was *A rewarder of thoſe who diligently ſeek him.* Heb. 11. 5, 6. And under the Jewiſh diſpenſation, God affirms, that *He never ſaid to the houſe of Jacob, ſeek ye my face in vain.* Iſai. 45. 19. And when the Son of God appears in fleſh, he ſpeaks plainer ſtill, *Aſk, and it ſhall given you; ſeek, and ye ſhall find; knock, and it ſhall be opened.* And to fix and ſettle us forever in the belief of this point, he goes on to reaſon thus, *Or what man is there of you, whom if his ſon aſk bread, will he give him a ſtone? Or if he aſk a fiſh, will he give him a ſerpent? If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more ſhall your Father who is in heaven, give good things to them that aſk him?*---'To them that aſk him'---be they who they will of all the human race. For the goſpel is by divine order, to be preached to *every creature.* And *whoſoever will let him come*; and *he that cometh ſhall in no wiſe be caſt out.*----The warrant to come to the throne of grace, is founded in the blood of the Son of God: for he has *opened a way into the holieſt of all, by his own blood.* And the invitations of the goſpel are given to all, without exception. *Go ye into the high-ways, and as many as ye find, bid to the marriage.* Any ſinner, therefore, on this ſide hell, has a good warrant to come to the throne of grace, to confeſs his ſins to God, and to aſk forgiveneſs in the name of

Chriſt. And no ſinner, who hath done ſo, in the manner in which God has directed, ever went away from the throne of grace unpardoned: but it has always happened to him, as it did to the prodigal ſon, *when he was yet afar off, his father ſaw him, and had compaſſion on him, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kiſſed him.* Of the truth of this, we have the ſame evidence, as we have, that Jeſus is the Meſſiah. For he hath ſaid, that *every one that asketh, receiveth.* Therefore,

3. From what has been ſaid on this ſubject, we may learn, that theſe words of Mr. *Stoddard*, before quoted, are ſtrictly true. Speaking of the unregenerate ſinner, he ſays, 'they do not the thing that God commands: there is no obedience to God in what they do: they don't attend the will of God.' * For if they did attend God's directions, and obey the divine exhortations, and *ask*, and *ſeek*, and *knock*, as they are commanded, they would obtain. The only reaſon their prayers are not anſwered, the only reaſon *they ask, and receive not*, is, *becauſe they ask amiſs.* i. e. becauſe they aſk not as God directs them, but in a manner contrary to his directions. So

* 'Men in their natural condition are guilty of a world of ſin.—'Their very religion is iniquity. Iſa. 1. 5.—They pray for holi-'neſs, but oppoſe it. Joh. 5. 52. *They have not the love of God in 'them.* They praiſe God becauſe of his excellency, but they don't 'believe him to be ſuch an one; it is a burden to them that they ſuſ-'pect it, and they wiſh he were not ſuch an one. They wiſh God 'did not ſee their hearts, and had not power to avenge him-'ſelf. There is nothing but hypocriſy in all they do. They con-'feſs their ſins, and bewail their iniquities, but they have no God-'ly ſorrow. They put up earneſt requeſts for holineſs, but don't 'ſincerely deſire it. They ſtrive againſt ſin, and all the while are 'cheriſhing of it. They have pangs of affection, but no love. 'They have ſome affection to ſaints, but hate real holineſs. They 'are zealous againſt ſome ſins, but hate none. They are ſtriving 'for ſalvation, but refuſe the offers of it. Sometimes God tries 'them, by convincing them of the great danger of their damnation, 'and they ſhew a dreadful wicked, rebellious ſpirit, that they are 'ſcared to ſee themſelves. There is a great deal of the ſpirit of the 'devil in them.' Stoddard's *Nature of converſion.* p. 96, 97, 98.

So again, the only reaſon they ſeek, and do not find, is, becauſe they ſeek amiſs. i. e. as Mr. M. expreſſes it, 'aim at what can never be accompliſhed, even to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs,' and will not *ſubmit themſelves to the righteouſneſs of God.* For *he that covereth his ſins ſhall not proſper; but whoſo confeſſeth and forſaketh them, ſhall have mercy.* * And, therefore,

4. The true reaſon and the only reaſon, that the doings of the unregenerate do not entitle them to the bleſſings promiſed in the goſpel, is, becauſe in all they do, there is no one act of compliance with God's directions. For if it is true, that *whoſo confeſſeth and forſaketh his ſins ſhall have mercy*; then it is equally true, that he, who hath not found mercy, never did confeſs and forſake his ſins, according to the divine direction. If it be true, that *every one that asketh, receiveth*; then it is equally true, that the unpardoned ſinner never did aſk pardon at the hands of God, in the ſenſe of the text. For to ſay, that *I have confeſſed and forſaken my ſins, I have asked pardon in the name of Chriſt, according to the divine direction*; *yet I have found no mercy, God hath not forgiven me*, is, if we may uſe the language of inſpiration, to *make God a liar.*

Therefore,

To ſay, that the unregenerate, in their endeavours, do

* Great pains have been taken to miſrepreſent and blacken this point. It hath been ſaid, that we affirm, that the unregenerate are not required to *ſeek*, or *ſtrive*, or *pray*. Whereas, in truth, we affirm, That the unregenerate are required to *ſeek*, and *ſtrive*, and *pray*: But then, we add, that 'they do not the thing that God commands.'—The queſtion, therefore, is not, whether God requires the unregenerate to *ſeek*, and *ſtrive*, and *pray*: But the only queſtion is, whether they 'do the thing that God commands.' This is the point in diſpute. St. Paul has declared for our ſide of the queſtion, in as ſtrong terms as ever we uſed, in Rom. 8. 7, 8. *The carnal mind is not ſubject to the law of God; neither indeed can be.*—And dare any Chriſtian allow himſelf to hate, and to blacken a doctrine taught by an inſpired apoſtle? Or is the doctrine ſo odious to any, that they will not believe, that he did not teach it, however ſtrongly his words expreſs it?

do the things that God commands them to do, and that yet there is no promiſe to their doings, is expreſsly to contradict the word of God. For he *never ſaid to the houſe of Jacob, ſeek ye my face in vain.*—And, therefore,

The queſtion between Mr. M. and us is not, whether God has required the unregenerate, to *ask*, and *ſeek*, and *knock*, and *ſtrive*, and *labour*. It is granted, that he has. And it is affirmed, that God has promiſed the bleſſings of the goſpel, to a compliance with theſe directions, in God's ſenſe of them. But it is alſo proved, from Mr. M's own words, that the unregenerate, 'as ſuch' to uſe Mr. Stoddard's words, 'do not attend the will of God: do not the thing that he commands;' becauſe as Mr. M. ſays, 'There is no promiſe of ſalvation to their endeavours,' Whereas *God promiſes ſalvation, to thoſe who comply with his directions.*

Now, therefore, let Mr. M. either take ſides with the *Arminians*, and ſay, that *there are promiſes to the doings of the unregenerate*: or let him join with Mr. *Stoddard*, and ſay, that 'they do not the thing that God commands: there is no obedience to God in what they do; they dont attend the will of God.'—Or let him openly and plainly declare, 'that God has directed ſinners what to 'do, that they may be ſaved; but it is not beſt that 'ſinners ſhould be urged to follow thoſe directions, 'which God has given them, which if they do fol-'low, they ſurely will be ſaved. And that, therefore, 'he is determined, to direct them, to do, as they do; 'altho' there is no promiſe to their doings. Yea, al-'tho', it is certain before hand, that they *never will 'accompliſh the thing they aim at.*'

A Miniſter of Chriſt is ſent to preach the goſpel to the Indians, and,

Queſtion 1. Is it not the duty of the Indians to aſſemble, and hear him?

Anſwer. Yes, it is their duty to aſſemble, to hear the goſpel preached. If the God of nature ſpeaks to men, men ought to hear.---But,—

Q. 2. Is it not their duty to come to hear with good and honeſt hearts, the firſt time they come?

A. Yes, it is as really their duty to come and hear with good and honeſt hearts the firſt time, as it is at any ſucceeding time. For it is as really the duty of Pagans to be well diſpoſed toward the true God, who made them, and ready to hearken to his voice, as it is the duty of any of the human kind. Rom, 1. 20, 21, 28.

Q. 3. But if they have all of them pagan hearts, ſhall they come and hear with their pagan hearts, in a pagan manner, rather than not come and hear at all?

A. If they come with pagan hearts, in a pagan manner, they ſin greatly. If they refuſe to come, their ſin is greater. If they come with pagan hearts, in a pagan manner, they are in great danger of turning a deaf ear to the goſpel, to their own deſtruction. But if they refuſe to come to all, their perdition is certain. So then it is for their intereſt to come with pagan hearts, in a pagan manner, rather than not to come at all. Rom. 10. 14.

Q. 4. Is the miſſionary authorized by the commiſſion of Chriſt to baptize theſe Pagans, as well as preach the goſpel to them?

A. The commiſſion of Chriſt authorizes him to preach to them, while Pagans; but not to baptize them until they become believers. Mark 16. 15, 16.

Q. 5. Suppoſe two Indians, in other reſpects equal, one has heard the goſpel twenty years, the other never heard of it, both die Pagans in heart, which will be moſt miſerable after death?

A. He that hath heard the goſpel. For he that knows his maſter's will, and does it not, ſhall be beaten with many ſtripes. Luk. 12. 47, 48.

Q. 6. If ſo, why is not a birth and education in the heathen world to be preferred?

A. In a land of goſpel light there is ſome hope of ſalvation from eternal miſery: In Pagan darkneſs there is

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no hope at all. Luk. 10. 10, 11, 12. Act. 4. 12. Eph. 2. 11, 12.

Q. 7. Is there then greater probability of the converſion of ſome ſinners than of others?

A. According to the rule by which mankind judge of likelihood, viz. That like things have been wont to take place in like circumſtances, it is more likely that ſome ſinners will be converted than others. Thus, more were converted among the poſterity of Abraham, from his day to the day of Chriſt, than in any other nation in the world, thro' that period. So more were converted among thoſe who attended the miniſtry of John baptiſt, of Jeſus Chriſt, and of his apoſtles, than among thoſe who never heard them. So there is more hope of the converſion of the children of godly parents, who are in a pious manner devoted to God in baptiſm, and who are brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; than there is of the converſion of the children of ungodly parents, who are brought to baptiſm merely to be in the faſhion, and who are brought up according to the courſe of this world, in the ſervice of diverſe luſts and pleaſures, to live in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another. And ſo it is more likely that they will be converted, who live under an orthodox, pious, faithful miniſter, and under the watch and care of a church, whoſe members walk with God, and the light of whoſe holy examples ſhines all around them; than they, who live under an unſound, ungodly, unfaithful miniſter, and in the company of carnal and looſe profeſſors, who join to hate and to blacken the true doctrines of the goſpel, and to ridicule a life of ſtrict piety. And ſo it is more likely that they, who are under deep and genuine legal conviction will be converted, than they who are quite ſecure in ſin; and more likely that awakened ſinners, who forſake bad company, and every external vicious practice, and ſpend much time in reading God's word, in hearing good preaching, in meditation, in ſecret prayer, and withal confeſs their faults to thoſe they have ill-uſed, and make reſtitution

reſtitution to thoſe they have injured.---More likely, I ſay, that awakened ſinners will be converted, who take this courſe, altho' moved thereto merely by legal terrors, and ſelf-righteous hope, being ſtill *dead in ſin*, contrary to God and to all good in the inmoſt temper of their hearts.---More likely, I ſay---than if they, with *Cain*, fled from the preſence of the Lord, and ran to taverns, and to frolicks, and gave up themſelves to drinking and debauchery, on purpoſe to ſtifle their convictons and drown the clamours of their conſciences.—In a word, there is no doubt, but that there is much more, even an hundred, or a thouſand times more likelihood, that ſome ſinners will be converted than others. Yet ſtill it remains true, as it is written, Mat. 19. 30. *But many that are firſt, ſhall be laſt; and the laſt, ſhall be firſt.* See alſo Luk. 13, 29, 30. Thus *Cain* was the eldeſt child of Adam, but he was left, while *Abel* was taken. And thus the Jews were God's peculiar people, but they were caſt off; while the Gentiles were called. And thus *Judas*, one of Chriſt's own family, is loſt; while a perſecuting *Saul*, brought up among the Phariſees, is ſaved. That *no fleſh might glory in the preſence* of God. 1. Cor. 1. 26—31.

Q. 8. Is there really any hope at all, in the ſinner's caſe, that he will be converted and ſaved, but what reſults merely from the ſovereign grace of God?

A. The ſame ſovereign grace, which paſſed by the fallen angels and provided a Redeemer for fallen man, even the Son of God to die in our ſtead, muſt as freely give us a Sanctifier, or we periſh. The ſame ſovereign grace that appoints our lot in a land of light, that prevents us with the external means of grace, that begins the work of conviction, that drives the reluctant ſinner to an external reformation and to a cloſe attention to eternal things by legal terrors, even the ſame ſovereign grace muſt carry on conviction till it is deep and thoro', and give repentance unto life, or the work will never be done. For the ſinner, left to himſelf, will catch hold of ſome falſe hope, or go back to ſecurity; and ſo finally,

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if left to himself, will infallibly perish.—And he deserves to be left to himself. He is under the curse of the righteous law of God, and may be justly given up to ruin. There is nothing but the sovereign grace of God to prevent it. And so there is really no hope in his case, but what at bottom results merely from the sovereign grace of God. Rom. 11. 5, 6, 7. Eph. 2. 1—5. Tit. 3. 3, 4, 5.

Q. 9. Is it for the advantage of the sinner, in this state, to tell him, that God requires him to do as he does, so that in doing as he does, he does what God requires?

A. No: This is not to tell him the truth, nor would this tend to promote his good, but his hurt; even to settle him down on his own righteousness, while dead in sin, as has been before shown.—Rather, when an awakened sinner has been in his closet two or three hours, meditating, crying and praying, in great anguish, driven on by the fears of hell and self-righteous hopes; yet still wholly impenitent, so that if there was no hell, he would never make another prayer, or shed another tear for his sins, but rather go back to them with pleasure; when he rises from his knees, I would have his conscience cry out against him, in such language as this, 'Oh, thou 'ungodly, impenitent, guilty wretch! thou hast done 'nothing all this while, as it ought to be done. Thy 'heart is still a heart of stone, wholly opposite to God 'and to all good. This is thy proper character; and therefore the wrath of God still abideth on thee.'---For this is the very truth.

Q. 10. What directions then ought to be given to such a sinner? And what ought we to say to him?

A. Say all the things that God has said. Hold up the perfect law of God close to his conscience, to shew him his duty and his sin: for the law is the school-master which God has appointed to bring us to Christ. Hold up the gospel way of salvation, with all its evidence to his conscience, that he may understand and believe it; for faith cometh by hearing. And let the whole tenor of all our discourse, to the sinner, be, to explain, and to enforce

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the exhortation of John baptiſt, of Jeſus Chriſt, and of his apoſtles, in thoſe remarkable words, REPENT AND BELIEVE THE GOSPEL. This will tend to increaſe genuine conviction of all ſin and guilt, and to prevent deluſive and falſe hopes, and to ſhut him up to the faith.

We are to dwell largely on the being and perfections of God, and our original obligations to him, who is by nature God, and our Creator. We are particularly to explain the nature and reaſonableneſs of the divine law, and to anſwer the ſinner's objections againſt it. We are to exhibit to his view the ſin which he ſtands charged with in the divine law, and the curſe he is under for it, and the only way of obtaining pardon thro' the blood of Chriſt. In a word, we are to open to his view the whole plan of the goſpel, the infinite riches of God's grace, the nature and ſufficiency of Chriſt's atonement, the readineſs of God to forgive repenting ſinners who come to him in the name of Chriſt, the calls and invitations of the goſpel, the dreadfulneſs of eternal miſery in the lake of fire and brimſtone; the glory and bleſſedneſs of the heavenly ſtate, the ſhortneſs and uncertainty of time, the worth of his ſoul, the dangers which attend him from the world, the fleſh and the devil, the inexcuſable guilt of final impenitence, the aggravated puniſhment of goſpel ſinners, &c. &c. &c. And ſo bring into the view of his conſcience every argument and motive to repent and to return to God thro' Jeſus Chriſt.

Juſt as any plain man of common ſenſe would do, who was ſent after a run-away ſon, who had riſen againſt his father, and made an attempt on his life, and then run off; for which his father had diſinherited him, and was determined he ſhould be diſinherited for ever, unleſs he would return, and before the whole family, on his knees, confeſs his fault, and take the whole blame to himſelf, and juſtify his father's reſentments, and freely own and acknowledge that it was good enough for him to be caſt off by his father, and no blemiſh but a beauty in his character to diſinherit ſuch a ſon: And in this view, aſk

forgiveneſs, as of mere free grace. Common ſenſe would teach ſuch a man, in all he ſaid, to this rebellious, run-away ſon, to vindicate his father's character and conduct, and to prove to him that all the blame was in him, and that it was his duty and intereſt, without the leaſt heſitation, or one objection, on the firſt invitation, to do as did the prodigal in the parable, when he came to himſelf, viz. *Ariſe and go to his father.* And ſo long as the run-away ſon ſhould refuſe to do this, common ſenſe would teach any plain man to conſider him as impenitent; and to look upon all his tears and cries as ſelfiſh and hypocritical.—But ſhould the run-away ſon not only refuſe to return, but begin, in his own juſtification, to plead, and ſay, 'My father's character, and my father's go-'vernment, are not objects of love. He has diſinherited 'me. To love him would be the ſame thing as to love 'to be diſinherited; which would be to love my own 'diſgrace and poverty; which would be to love my own 'miſery; which is impoſſible. To ſay, that this con-'duct of his is not a blemiſh, but a beauty in his cha-'racter, would be a ſin: For I ought to love myſelf 'and to ſtand for my honor, and for my right. Such a 'ſubmiſſion he ſhall never have from me. However, if 'he will receive me to favour, and reſtore me to the in-'heritance, impenitent as I am, I will forgive what is 'paſt, and be reconciled for the future.' Common ſenſe would declare ſuch a ſon, not only impenitent, but obſtinately impenitent, and intollerably haughty. And, in this view, any plain man would tell him, in the moſt peremptory language, that there was no hope in his caſe, unleſs he would humble himſelf, and come to a deep and ſound repentance. Thus John baptiſt, Jeſus Chriſt and his apoſtles called ſinners to repentance; and never once gave, impenitent ſinners, as ſuch, the leaſt ground to hope for pardon, but expreſsly ſaid, *Except ye repent, ye ſhall all periſh.* And to the true penitent, they gave no ground to hope for pardon, on the foot of his own righteouſneſs. For it was a ſettled point, that *without ſhed-*

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ding of blood there is no remiſſion. And, indeed, that repentance is not genuine, in which we do not, from the heart, give up every ſelf-juſtifying plea, take all the blame to ourſelves, and accept the puniſhment of our iniquity, with a diſpoſition to look only to free grace thro' Jeſus Chriſt, for that pardon and ſalvation which the goſpel offers.

N. B. In this plan of dealing with an awakened ſinner, two things are taken for granted, viz. (1.) That total depravity and moral agency are conſiſtent. And (2.) That repentance unto life is conſiſtently, both, the ſinner's duty, and God's gift. Ezek. 18. 31. and chap. 36. 26. Act. 2. 38. Act. 3. 19. Act. 5. 31.

Objection. The run-away ſon, in the ſimilitude, is a moral agent with reſpect to all the duties required of him by his father; and ſo is wholly to blame for his diſaffection to his father, and may be conſidered and treated accordingly: but the unregenerate ſinner is not a moral agent, with reſpect to that love to God, which is required in the law, or to that faith and repentance, which are called for in the goſpel. That is, he cannot love God, believe, or repent. And therefore he cannot be conſidered, as being wholly to blame for his diſaffection towards God, and for his unbelief and impenitence, or treated accordingly. For 'to love God as exhibited in the law, is the ſame thing as to love his own miſery.' And to believe in Chriſt and repent before he has had 'a diſcovery of Chriſt,' is as impoſſible as it is to love an object of which we have no idea. To exhort the unregenerate ſinner, therefore, as we would exhort ſuch a run-away ſon, is abſurd and inconſiſtent. p. 42. 43.

Anſw. It is true, that, in thus dealing with the awakened ſinner, we conſider him, while unregenerate, as a moral agent, poſſeſſed of every qualification eſſential to moral agency. For we think that unregeneracy conſiſts, not in being deſtitute of any of thoſe natural faculties which are eſſential to moral agency, but only in being deſtitute of a heart to do our duty, and in having an heart

heart oppoſite thereto. Joh. 3. 6. Rom. 8. 7. But want of inclination and diſinclination to that duty which God requires of us, inſtead of leſſening blame, is that for which we are blame-worthy. Luk. 19. 27. We conſider the unregenerate ſinner, therefore, with reſpect to love to God, and faith in Chriſt, and with reſpect to all duties required in law and goſpel, as a moral agent, to whom the commands of the one, and the exhortations of the other may, with propriety, be given; and who is wholly to blame in not obeying the one, and in not complying with the other. And all we ſhall, at preſent, ſay, in anſwer to the objection, is, that if the unregenerate ſinner is not a moral agent, with reſpect to the divine law, then he does not deſerve the curſe of it, for not *continuing in all things*: Which to ſay, is to contradict, Gal. 3. 10. And if he is not a moral agent, with reſpect to the goſpel, the external revelation of it being enjoyed, then he is not to blame for impenitence and unbelief, nor does he deſerve any puniſhment for theſe crimes: Which to ſay, is to contradict, Mat. 11. 20—24. Luk. 10. 3—12. Joh. 3. 18, 19. Jon. 16. 9. In a word, if the unregenerate ſinner is not a moral agent with reſpect to law and goſpel, then the old and new teſtament, which conſider and treat him as ſuch, are not from God. To ſay, therefore, he is not a moral agent, is, in effect, to give up divine revelation. That is, to ſay, that the unregenerate ſinner is not wholly to blame, in not loving God with all his heart, and his neighbour as himſelf; and that the unregenerate ſinner, who lives under the light of the goſpel, is not wholly to blame for impenitence and unbelief, is to deny the firſt principles of the ſcripture ſcheme of religion, and, in effect, to give up the whole of it. And to give up the bible, rather than to take that blame to ourſelves, which belongs to us, is the very eſſence of infidelity, and that which conſtitutes it ſo great a crime. Joh. 3. 19, 20.——See Preſident *Edwards* on *freedom of will*, part 3. ſect. iv.

SECTION

SECTION V.

Gal. iii. 10. *For as many as are of the works of the law, are under the curſe: For it is written, Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.*

Impenitent, ſelf-righteous, chriſtleſs ſinners are under the curſe of the law of God: But this is inconſiſtent with their being in covenant with God, in good ſtanding, in his ſight, by any works which they do, while ſuch.

WE will premiſe a few things, and then particularly explain and prove the above propoſition, and ſhew the inconſiſtence between the covenant of works, and Mr. M's external covenant, conſidered as conditional.

1. God the Creator, and moral Governor of the world, did originally deſerve ſupreme love, and univerſal, perfect obedience from his creature man. This was implied in that law given to Adam, *In the day thou eateſt thereof, thou ſhalt ſurely die.*

2. God is in himſelf as amiable now, as he was before the fall of man; as worthy to be loved, honored and obeyed; for he is the ſame now, that he was then. There is no alteration in his nature, and he has done nothing to forfeit his character; if, therefore, before the fall he was worthy of love, he is equally worthy ſince. To ſay, that there was originally any blemiſh in the divine Character; or to ſay, that he has brought any blemiſh upon himſelf, in any inſtance of his conduct, ſince the beginning of the world, is to deny his divinity. It is to ſay, that he is not by nature God: He is not, and never was an abſolutely perfect being. A denial of the divinity of Chriſt is the foundation of the *Arian* hereſy. But we muſt deny the divinity of God the Father, we muſt deny the divinity of the Godhead itſelf, or we can never juſtify the leaſt degree of diſaffection toward the Deity in our hearts: but muſt take the whole blame to ourſelves. For if God is in himſelf the ſame infinitely amiable

miable Being, he has been from everlaſting, and if all his conduct has been like himſelf, perfect in beauty, without a blemiſh; if we do not love him with all our hearts, the whole fault muſt be in ourſelves, and not at all in him.---And on the other hand, if God has, in any inſtance, done amiſs, not conducted in that perfect, in that amiable and glorious manner, which became him, who is by nature God; it muſt be owned, that we have juſt cauſe to love him leſs, and in ſome degree, at leaſt, to diſlike him; and our conduct in ſo doing may be vindicated. Nor can God be juſt when he ſpeaketh, or clear when he judgeth, if he looks upon us and treats us, as being wholly to blame, in not loving him with all our hearts. But if the blame is not wholly in us, it is partly in him. And if there is the leaſt blemiſh in his character, or conduct, then he is not ſo perfect as he might be; he is not abſolutely perfect. That is, he is not God.——Therefore,

3. The denial of the divinity of the one only, true, and living God, is the only foundation on which, conſiſtently, fallen man can be juſtified more or leſs, in not perfectly conforming to the divine law. For, if it is granted, that the divine Character was originally, abſolutely perfect, and that the whole of his conduct towards us from the beginning of the world has been abſolutely perfect too, then every thing in God, and belonging to God, conſpires to render him a perfectly amiable, and lovely Being, and to oblige us to love him with all our hearts, and to render us criminal and without excuſe in the leaſt neglect, or defect. Nor can there be any excuſe invented but what muſt iſſue in a denial of his divinity. For if the fault is not wholly in us, it is partly in him: and if partly in him, then he is not abſolutely perfect; i. e. he is not God.---And to ſay, that, by the fall, man ceaſed to be a moral agent, is, by fair conſtruction, ſubverſive of the whole of divine revelation. For,

4. It is a dictate of common ſenſe, that we do not need a ſurety to pay a debt for us, which we ourſelves do

do not owe. And, therefore, if the divine law was not binding on fallen man, antecedent to the conſideration of Chriſt's undertaking to anſwer the demands of the law in our ſtead, then there was no need that he ſhould have undertaken to anſwer the demands of the law in our ſtead. For there was no need, that our ſurety ſhould pay a debt for us, that we ourſelves did not owe, and never could have owed had he never undertaken in our behalf. An atonement might have been needed for Adam's firſt offence; but if Adam and all his race, on the apoſtaſy, ceaſed to be moral agents, & ſo ceaſed to be bound by the moral law to perpetual, perfect obedience, as Mr. M. maintains; (p. 50) there was no need of an atonement for the *many offences*, which have taken place ſince the fall: for theſe *many offences* are not *ſins*; for where there is *no law, there is no tranſgreſſion.* And *ſin is not imputed, where there is no law.* And thus, if we give up the law, we muſt give up the goſpel too; and, to be conſiſtent, become infidels complete. But,

5. If God the creator, and moral governor of the world, was originally an abſolutely perfect Being; and if he deſerved the ſupreme love and the perfect obedience of his creature man before the fall, and if he deſerves the ſame ſince the fall; and, if we, retaining our original natural faculties, by which, before the fall, man was a moral agent, remain the ſame ſtill; then may we conſiſtently believe the bible to be the word of God. For, on theſe hypotheſes, the divine law may be vindicated, which, relative to fallen man, and that conſidered as unregenerate and Chriſtleſs, ſays, *Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them.* And if this law was worthy of God, then it might be worthy of God to appoint his Son *to be made a curſe, to redeem us from the curſe of the law.*—But of this I have ſpoken particularly heretofore; § and ſo need not enlarge. Therefore, We

§ *Eſſay on the Nature and Glory of the Goſpel.* Sect. III. and IV. To which eſſay I am conſtrained ſo frequently to refer the reader, in order to avoid re-publiſhing things which I have already written in that book.

We proceed to explain and prove the propoſition before laid down, viz. That *impenitent, ſelf-righteous, Chriſtleſs ſinners are under the curſe of the law of God; but this is inconſiſtent with their being in covenant with God, in good ſtanding in his ſight. For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curſe*, &c. And,

1. By *ſin* is meant, 'any want of conformity unto, or tranſgreſſion of the law of God."---This definition of ſin, which is given by *the Aſſembly of Divines at Weſtminſter*, is taken out of thoſe two texts. 1 John 3. 4. *Sin is a tranſgreſſion of the law.* Gal. 3. 10. *Curſed is every one, that continueth not in all things*, &c.

2. By *the law* is meant, God's holy law, which requires holineſs and nothing but holineſs. For if the law of God required *ſin*, then *ſin* would be not only 'a tranſgreſſion of,' but alſo 'a conformity unto' the law of God. An abſurdity eſſential to Mr. M's ſcheme. An abſurdity his ſcheme can no ſooner get rid of, than *the Ethiopian can change his ſkin.*

The holineſs required in the divine law is ſummed up in love. 'The ſum of the ten commandments is, thou 'ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, &c. 'and thy neighbour as thyſelf. So we were taught by our catechiſm, when we were children. Nor am I able to expreſs my ſentiments with more plainneſs and preciſion on the ſubject, than was done in my former piece. p. 25, 26. 'The law of Moſes, which was the rule of 'duty in the covenant into which the Iſraelites entered, required nothing but holineſs. That covenant 'which was externally exhibited, and externally entered into, was ſo far from being a graceleſs covenant, 'that it required nothing but true grace and real holineſs; nothing but *love*, with all its various exerciſes 'and fruits, in heart and life; *love to God and man*; of 'this we are expreſsly aſſured by One who came from 'God, and infallibly underſtood the nature of that diſpenſation. Mat. 22. 36---40. *Maſter, which is the great 'commandment of the law?* Said a Phariſee to our Savi-

'our,

'our referring to the law of Moſes. *Jeſus ſaid unto him, thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart*, &c. *this is the firſt and great commandment; and the ſecond is like unto it, thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thyſelf.* Thus he had anſwered the Phariſee's queſtion. But he proceeded to add another ſentiment, which overthrew the Phariſaic ſcheme by the roots. *On theſe two commands hang all the law and the prophets*: for if the law obliged the Jew to perform every duty in a holy manner, out of love; and required no other kind of obedience but this; if *all the law and the prophets hung on theſe two commands*; ſo that radically love was all; ſo that this holy love was *the fulfilling of the law*, Rom. 13. 8, 10; then the Phariſees who were entirely deſtitute of this, were equally deſtitute of that kind of religion required in the Moſaic law, and ſo their ſcheme was torn up by the roots.—It is not only a fundamental maxim in the ſcripture ſcheme of religion, that *love is the fulfilling of the law*; but it is expreſsly affirmed, that without love the higheſt gifts, and the greateſt attainments, the moſt expenſive deeds, and the moſt cruel ſufferings are nothing, and will profit nothing. The apoſtle Paul carries the point ſo far as to ſay, *Tho' I ſpeak with the tongues of men and angels, and have not charity, I am as ſounding braſs, or a tinkling cymbal*; as deſtitute of true and real virtue. *And tho' I have the gift of propheſy, and underſtand all myſteries, and have all knowledge; and tho' I have all faith, ſo that I could remove mountains, and have no charity, I am nothing.* And to carry the point as high as it can poſſibly be carried, he adds; *And tho' I beſtow all my goods to feed the poor, and tho' I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.* For in his view charity, or love was the ſum total of all virtue—Therefore, where there is no love, there is no virtue: Not the leaſt degree of conformity to God's nature and law.' For the apoſtle never dreamt, that that *ſelf-love* which reigns in the hearts of devils, and of wicked men, was any part

of that *charity* in which he made all true virtue to conſiſt. For then it could not have been ſaid of the vileſt ſinner, that he *hath no charity*; whereas the apoſtle ſuppoſes this might be true, of ſome eminent profeſſors, who even gave *all their goods to feed the poor, and their bodies to be burned*, that they *had no charity*. Beſides, if that ſelf-love is a part of what the divine law requires, then that which is the principle of all enmity againſt the Deity, is matter of duty: than which, nothing can be more abſurd.‡—But to proceed,

3. By a *ſinner*, in the propoſition, is not meant merely, one that has ſinned, and does ſin every day, for this is true of *ſaints*. But by a *ſinner* is meant one who is wholly deſtitute of that holineſs which is required in God's law. One who has been *born* only *of the fleſh*, and ſo is only *fleſh*: who hath *not* been *born of the ſpirit*, and ſo hath *not the ſpirit of Chriſt*. Whoſe character is given by the Holy Ghoſt, in Rom. 8. 7. 8. *The carnal mind is enmity againſt God; for it is not ſubject to the law of God, neither indeed can be: So then they that are in the fleſh cannot pleaſe God.* For that the Holy Ghoſt meant to comprehend all unregenerate ſinners, is evident from the next words. Ver. 9. *But ye are not in the fleſh, but in the ſpirit, if ſo be that the ſpirit of God dwell in you.* So then, all thoſe, in whom, the ſpirit of God dwelleth not, are *in the fleſh*; which is the character of every Chriſtleſs ſinner. For *if any man have not the ſpirit of Chriſt, he is none of his.* So that, by a ſinner is meant, one who is dead in ſin, and an enemy to God. A character, in the ſight of God, infinitely criminal; as is evident from this,

‡ When it is ſaid, *thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thyſelf*, this neither juſtifies the ſelfiſh ſpirit of wicked men, nor requires the exerciſe of a like temper with reſpect to their neighbour; but only teaches us, that as our neighbour's welfare is worth as much as our own, (*cæteris paribus*) ſo it ought to be as dear to us, as our own ought to be. Even as it is among the angels in heaven, and as it muſt always be in creatures under the perfect government of pure benevolence. For this will be exerciſed towards beings, in proportion to their true worth. See Preſident *Edwards* on *the nature of true virtue*.

this, that his law dooms perſons of this character to eternal miſery; which is a puniſhment infinitely dreadful.

4. By an *impenitent, ſelf-righteous* ſinner is meant a ſinner, who being really of the character juſt ſtated, yet inſtead of confeſſing and forſaking, is habitually diſpoſed to *cover his ſins*, and *juſtify himſelf in his wickedneſs*. Even as our firſt parents covered their nakedneſs with fig-leaves, and did all they could to hide themſelves from God, and ſaid all they could to juſtify themſelves. The laſt words which Adam ſpake when called before his Judge, previous to the ſentence paſſed upon him, were deſigned to excuſe himſelf, and to lay the blame upon God, who had given him ſuch a tempter; and upon her who had tempted him. The words are very remarkable. *The woman, which thou gaveſt to be with me, ſhe gave me of the tree, and I did eat.* And yet Mr. M. repreſents Adam, in theſe words, as making 'a full confeſſion of his guilt.' p. 17. And as being ſo humbled, 'as that he was prepared to receive a diſcovery of redeeming mercy with all his heart.' p. 47. It is a dangerous thing to flatter ſinners into a good opinion of themſelves. Adam firſt covered his nakedneſs with fig-leaves, before God came, to call him to an account: for he could not endure to ſee himſelf. And when God came, he fled, and *he hid himſelf from the preſence of the Lord amongſt the trees of the garden*: for he could not endure to be ſeen by God. *For he that doth evil hateth the light.* And when he was forced to come forth, and appear before his Judge, he came with guile in his mouth, ſaying, *I was afraid, becauſe I was naked, and I hid myſelf.* For it was not the nakedneſs of his body, but a guilty conſcience, which made him hide himſelf. But he could not bear to own his ſin. He dreaded to have it brought into view: and when cloſely examined and pinched to the very heart, ſo that he could not conceal the fact which he had done; yet then he would cunningly put into his confeſſion, every extenuating circumſtance, that as much as poſſible, the blame might be caſt off from himſelf, wherever elſe it might fall.

fall, Ungrateful wretch! to blame his kind Creator, and bountiful Benefactor! *The woman, which thou gaveſt to be with me, ſhe gave me of the tree, and I did eat.* Nothing is owned, but merely the external act; the bad intention, the proud, wicked, rebellious heart is kept out of view: their aſpiring to be *as God's*: their believing the ſerpent's lies before the God of truth, &c. &c. But here we have a ſpecimen of the true nature of impenitence. This diſpoſition to *cover their ſin* took place in our firſt parents on their fall, and it has ſpread thro' all their guilty race. And mankind have proceeded ſo far, as even to invent new ſchemes of religion, not revealed in, but contrary to the holy ſcriptures, to cover their ſins and to juſtify themſelves in their wickedneſs. Nor may be it amiſs to mention one or two ſchemes of this ſort, that we may ſee how the charge exhibited in the divine law againſt the ſinner is evaded, and himſelf freed from blame, and juſtified in his own conſcience. Thus,

The charge exhibited in God's holy law againſt the ſinner is, that *he ſins and deſerves eternal damnation, for not continuing in all things written in the book of the law to do them.* —But—'the ſum of the ten commandments is, Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart—and thy neighbour as thyſelf.'—The *Arminian* pleads, and ſays, 'No man can be obliged to keep this law. For no man 'can exerciſe principles which he has not. For that 'implies a contradiction. * But we have loſt our power 'of

* By *a principle of love* is meant, *a diſpoſition to love*, or *a heart to love*. But to ſay, I have no heart to love God, and therefore I am not obliged to love him, is to ſay, that the more depraved I am, the leſs to blame I am. He who has no heart at all to honor his father and his mother, is, on this hypotheſis, blameleſs. Let the parents be ever ſo worthy, if the child has no heart to love and honor them, he is free. So a diſhoneſt man, who has no heart to pay his debts, is not obliged; and a covetous niggard, who has no heart to give to the poor, is not bound. For, on this hypotheſis, our inclination is our rule of duty, and not the law of God. Not what is right and fit, and, as ſuch, is required by God, the ſole Monarch of the univerſe, is my duty; but only that which ſuits my own heart. So *Pharaoh* ſaid, *Who is the Lord? I know not the Lord, nor will I obey his voice.* Pharaoh had no principle of love and obedience, and ſo he was not obliged. So he felt.—But the God of the Hebrews imputed it to him for ſin.

'of yielding perfect obedience in Adam. We cannot 'love God with all our heart, and our neighbour as our-'ſelves. We are not to blame for not doing what we 'cannot do. And, therefore, we are not to blame, nor 'do we deſerve the *curſe*, for *not continuing in all things 'written in the book of the law to do them.* This law is too 'ſevere for a fallen world. Chriſt has died for us; and 'ſo the law is abated. And if we do as well as we can, 'we ſhall be ſaved. For it would be unjuſt for God to 'require more of us than we can do, and then damn us 'for not doing.'—Thus they reaſon, and thus they believe, and thus their ſins are covered even from the ſight of their own conſciences, and they ſtand juſtified in themſelves.———Again,

The charge exhibited in God's holy law againſt the ſinner is, that *he ſins, and deſerves eternal damnation, for not continuing in all things written in the book of the law to do them.* —But 'the ſum of the ten commandments is, Thou ſhalt 'love the Lord thy God with all thy heart—and thy 'neighbour as thyſelf.'---The *Antinomian* pleads, and ſays, ---'This law is not in force with reſpect to fallen man 'at all: And ſo I am not in the leaſt to blame for not 'continuing in all things written in it. For to love that 'character of God, which is exhibited in his law, is the 'ſame thing as to love my own miſery. But to love my 'own miſery is to take pleaſure in pain; which is an 'expreſs contradiction, and in its very nature abſolutely 'impoſſible; and even inconſiſtent with my continuing 'to exiſt, as a ſenſible being, and a moral agent. And, 'beſides, it is contrary to the law of God, which requires 'me to love myſelf. That law, therefore, which was 'given to Adam in innocence, and which obliged him 'to love that character of God, which was exhibited in 'it, is entirely ſet aſide ſince the fall; and is binding on 'no child of Adam, more or leſs, as a rule of duty. 'For it is not the duty of any one to love that character 'of God, which is exhibited in the moral law. Nay, 'it is now ſince the fall contrary to the law of God to

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'do it. For the law of God requires us to love ourſelves; but to love that character of God, which is exhibited in the moral law, is the ſame thing, as to love our own miſery. And, therefore, inſtead of its being a duty, it is a ſin, repugnant to the law of God, to love that character of God, which is exhibited in the moral law; and ſo it ought not to be done.——Moreover, no unregenerate unbeliever can love that character of God, which is revealed in the goſpel, becauſe he doth not know it. For an unknown object cannot be loved. For to love an object of which we have no idea, is to love nothing, which is a contradiction, and in its own nature abſolutely impoſſible.---Wherefore, before Chriſt is diſcovered to the ſoul by the ſpirit of God, while unregenerate, no man is in duty bound to love, either the character of God, exhibited in the law, or the character of God revealed in the goſpel. Nothing, therefore, remains for unregenerate, unbelievers, to do, as their preſent duty, but to reform their external practice, uſe the means of grace, and ſtrive, and do their utmoſt, as unregenerate ſinners may do, while ſuch. Of ſuch therefore it may be ſaid, that they forſake all known ſin, and practiſe all known duty. Such, then, who are come to a fixed reſolution thus to do, are qualified to enter into covenant with God, and to attend ſealing ordinances. For their being deſtitute of faith, repentance and love, is their calamity, but not their ſin.'---Thus *Antinomians* reaſon, thus they believe, and thus their ſins are covered even from the ſight of their own conſciences, and they ſtand juſtified in themſelves. And thus we ſee, what is meant by *an impenitent, ſelf-righteous* ſinner, viz. a ſinner, obſtinate in his diſaffection to the Deity, who covers his ſins, and juſtifies himſelf in his wickedneſs. To proceed.

5. By a *chriſtleſs* ſinner is meant, a ſinner, who doth not receive, but doth in his heart reject JeſusChriſt; and ſo is not intereſted in him, and the bleſſings purchaſed by him; and ſo remains at preſent under the curſe of the

the law and the wrath of God, as truly and really as if Chriſt had never died; according to thoſe words, in Joh. 3. 18, 36. *He that believeth not is condemned already*—and *the wrath of God abideth on him.*—But, in this ſenſe, every impenitent, ſelf-righteous ſinner, is a chriſtleſs ſinner; for this plain reaſon, becauſe they do not receive, but reject Chriſt. As it is written, Luk. 5. 31. *The whole need not a phyſician, but the ſick.* For ſinners never feel their want of Chriſt, or look to God thro' him for pardon, in thoſe things, in which, they juſtify themſelves; or for divine aſſiſtance, in thoſe things, which they think themſelves not bound in duty to do. For inſtance, an *Arminian*, as he does not think himſelf to blame, for not loving God with all his heart; ſo he never means to aſk pardon of God in the name of Chriſt, as being to blame for this. He only blames himſelf, when he neglects to do as well as he can, in his own ſenſe of the phraſe; and feels guilt and need of pardon only in theſe inſtances. But as to the law of perfection, as he thinks himſelf not bound by that; ſo he thinks himſelf not to blame for not continuing in all things written in the book of the law to do them; and ſo no atonement, no ſanctifier, no repentance, no pardon are needed in this caſe.—So again, an *Antinomian*, as he doth not believe it to be his duty to love that character of God which is exhibited in his holy law; ſo he never confeſſeth his ſin in not doing of it, or aſks pardon of God, or dreams that he needs any pardon, in this caſe; or any Redeemer to atone for this ſin, or any Sanctifier to enable him to do this duty. For, if it is not his duty to love that character of God, which is exhibited in his holy law, then he needs no aſſiſtance to do it. For we need divine aſſiſtance only to enable us to do our duty. And if it is not his duty to love that character of God, which is exhibited in his holy law, then he is guilty of no ſin in not loving of it; and ſo needs no Chriſt, no atonement, no repentance, no pardon in the affair: And thus, that Chriſt, that pardon, that grace which are offered in the goſpel, he doth not

need;

need; and ſo doth not receive, but reject. Yea, he rejects all, as an abuſe. For, to tell a ſinner, he needs a pardon, in that, in which, he juſtifies himſelf, will affront him; he will think himſelf abuſed; he will think himſelf implicitly charged with guilt, in that, in which, he is not guilty. And ſo inſtead of deſiring the pardon, he will reject the offer, as an abuſe. And thus do all impenitent, ſelf-righteous ſinners, with reſpect to that pardon and to that ſanctifying grace, which the goſpel offers. As they need neither the one nor the other, ſo they reject both, with all their hearts. *For the whole need not a phyſician, but the ſick.*

And in every inſtance, in which men juſtify themſelves, they depend, ſo far as they have any dependance, for acceptance in the ſight of God, not on the atonement of Chriſt, but on their own innocence. For their plea is, NOT GUILTY. Here they join iſſue; and appeal to the judgment ſeat of God. Luk. 18. 9---13. And, therefore,

If the divine law doth require mankind to *be perfect, as our Father, which is in heaven, is perfect*, notwithſtanding our fallen ſtate: if the law of God requires perfection of us, as much as it did of Adam; if we are to blame, and deſerve eternal death, for *not continuing in all things*, as really as Adam did for eating the forbidden fruit; and if on this hypotheſis, and in this view, *Chriſt was made a curſe, to redeem ſinners from this curſe*; yet, if we plead NOT GUILTY; if we affirm that we are not bound by this law; if we affirm that in our fallen ſtate it is not poſſible that we ſhould be bound by it; if we join iſſue on this point, and appeal to the judgment of God: if God brings us in GUILTY, at the great day, it will be too late then, to *ſhift our plea*. It will be too late to ſay, that our dependance was on the atonement of Chriſt. For it may be retorted,—'If you were not 'guilty, you needed no atonement. But this was your 'plea, NOT GUILTY. And you appealed to the judg'ment ſeat of God. It is too late therefore now to pre-

'tend

'tend you depended on the atonement. Your firſt plea 'precludes this.'——They muſt therefore have their trial, and ſtand, or fall, for eternity, on their firſt plea, of NOT GUILTY.—And therefore it will come to paſs, that every impenitent, ſelf-righteous ſinner will be condemned, unleſs they can make their firſt plea good, at the bar of God. If the Judge will give up his law, they may be acquitted. But if he abides by what is written, viz. *As many as are of the works of the law are under the curſe; as it is written, curſed is every one, that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them*; there will be no hope in their caſe, at that day. And, therefore, all who, either on the *Arminian*, or on the *Antinomian*, or on any other plan, do, in heart, reject the perfect law of God, for their rule of life in this world, will periſh for ever in the next.

And thus we ſee, what is meant by *an impenitent, ſelf-righteous, Chriſtleſs ſinner*. Now in the propoſition it is ſaid, that 'impenitent, ſelf-righteous, Chriſtleſs ſinners are *under the curſe* of the law of God.'—But,

6. By the *curſe* of the law is meant, the curſe threatned in the law of God; even all the curſes written in God's book, compriſing 'all the miſeries of this life, and death itſelf, and the pains of hell for ever.'

7. When it is ſaid, that they are *under* this curſe, it is intended, that they are already condemned to all this by the law of God, and are liable to have the curſe executed, in its utmoſt rigour, i. e. to be ſtruck dead, and ſent to hell, at any moment. They are reprieved, moment by moment, by the ſovereign pleaſure of their Judge.

That Chriſtleſs ſinners are thus *under* the curſe of the law, is evident not only from the tenor of the law itſelf, but alſo from the whole courſe of the divine conduct. For, according to this rule, God hath dealt with Chriſtleſs ſinners, in all ages of the world. As to *the miſeries of this life*, he inflicts them upon them, according to his ſovereign pleaſure. As to *death itſelf*, he inflicts it juſt when he pleaſes. And as ſoon as the Chriſtleſs ſinner is

dead, in an inſtant, he is in hell, and muſt endure *the pains of hell forever*. Therefore, from the tenor of the divine law, and of the divine conduct, it is evident, that God is at liberty, with reſpect to them, to kill and damn, any Chriſtleſs ſinner, at what moment he pleaſes. And therefore he is not bound not to do ſo. And therefore there is no covenant between God and the ſinner exiſting, obliging God to beſtow any favour, on any one Chriſtleſs ſinner, now in the world: but he may ſtrike dead and ſend to hell, juſtly and without breach of covenant, any chriſtleſs ſinner who draws the breath of life. Thus, in this ſenſe, *impenitent, ſelf-righteous, Chriſtleſs ſinners are under the curſe of the law.*

8. And this is true of ſelf-righteous, Chriſtleſs ſinners, without exception, as the apoſtle affirms, *As many as are of the works of the law, are under the curſe.* Be they circumciſed Jews, or baptized Gentiles; or be they both circumciſed and baptized too, as doubtleſs many were in the churches of *Galatia*, to whom he was writing: Yet neither their circumciſion, nor their baptiſm, at all altered the caſe. For the circumciſed and the uncircumciſed, the baptized, and the unbaptized, are all equally under the curſe of the law, if of a ſelf-righteous character. For they reject Chriſt, and ſo can have no intereſt in him; as by divine conſtitution none are intereſted in him, but thoſe who receive him. Joh. 1. 12. and 3. 18. And, therefore, they muſt ſtand or fall by mere law. But the law ſays, *Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things.*

The law doth not ſay, 'curſed is every uncircumciſed Gentile;' nor doth the law ſay, 'curſed is every unbaptized Pagan:' but thus it is written, 'curſed is every one:' be he Jew, or Gentile; be he Chriſtian, or Pagan; be he circumciſed, or baptized, or neither; if he be ſelf-righteous, and Chriſtleſs, he is curſed. For theſe things alter not the caſe at all. Rom. 2. 25, 28, 29. *For circumciſion verily profiteth, if thou keep the law; but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumciſion is made un-*

uncircumciſion. For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly, neither is that circumciſion, which is outward in the fleſh: but he is a Jew which is one inwardly: and circumciſion is that of the heart, in the ſpirit, and not in the letter, whoſe praiſe is not of men, but of God. Therefore baptized ſinners, if they are Chriſtleſs, are as much under the curſe of the law, as thoſe who are unbaptized: and ſo, are as liable to 'all the miſeries of this life, to death itſelf, and to the pains of hell forever.' And God is as much at liberty to ſtrike dead and ſend to hell, at any moment, ſelf-righteous, Chriſtleſs ſinners, who are baptized, as thoſe who are unbaptized. He is not bound by covenant to the one, any more than to the other. But, as to life, and to the outward means of ſalvation, and to the ſtrivings of the Spirit, he is at perfect liberty, to *have mercy on whom he will have mercy.* This is certain from the whole tenor of the divine conduct. For we all know, that baptized ſinners are as liable to ſudden death as the unbaptized. And when they die, there is an end to all the outward means of ſalvation, and inward ſtrivings of the Spirit, and nothing before them, but the pains of hell forever. So that there is no covenant between God and them in the way; there is nothing of this kind to hinder; but God is at perfect liberty to execute the curſe of the law, on any Chriſtleſs ſinner, at any moment he pleaſes. For they are all in his hands, held up over hell by the thread of their lives, juſtly condemned, at his ſovereign diſpoſal. And accordingly, he lets one drop into hell *now*, and another *then*, juſt as he pleaſes, from day to day, from hour to hour, continually. And this hath been his conſtant courſe of conduct in all ages paſt. And thus every Chriſtleſs ſinner is under the curſe of the law.—But here, it may be inquired, for what crime, or crimes, are they thus, by the law of God, ſentenced to eternal woe? To which, the anſwer is plain. For,

9. This curſe ſelf-righteous, chriſtleſs ſinners are ſentenced unto by the divine law, for not yielding a perfect

obedience

obedience to it, continually, every day. Curſed is every one that *continueth not in all things.* So that the law of perfection is binding on the unregenerate, chriſtleſs ſinner. And in the judgment of him, whoſe judgment is always according to truth, they deſerve eternal woe, for every inſtance of defect, in thought, word, or deed; in matter or manner. And that whether they were from eternity elected to ſalvation, or not; and whether Chriſt died with an abſolute deſign to ſave them, or not; and whether they enjoy the ſtrivings of God's ſpirit, or are given up to their own hearts luſts: Yea, and whether they enjoy the benefit of a written revelation, or not. Rom. 1. 18—21. *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven againſt all ungodlineſs, and unrighteouſneſs of men.—So that* even the heathen *are without excuſe; becauſe when they knew God,* only by the light of nature, and tradition, *they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful.* Rom. 3. 9. *For we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under ſin.* Ver. 19. *That every mouth may be ſtopped, and* ALL THE WORLD *may become guilty before God.* For the curſe extends to every one, to every Chriſtleſs ſinner of Adam's race. So that the divine law is binding on fallen men, previous to the conſideration of the grace of the goſpel. And mankind are under ſo great obligations to perfect obedience, that in the judgment of him, *who is over all God bleſſed forever,* they deſerve eternal woe, for any one defect, for not *continuing* in *all* things. For ſuch is the infinite dignity of the Deity, ſuch his infinite worthineſs of ſupreme love and univerſal obedience, in being what he is in himſelf, and our Creator, that, on theſe original grounds, it is infinitely criminal, not to love him with all our hearts, and obey him in every thing. Nor doth our original apoſtaſy in Adam, or our preſent depravity, or our guilt and expoſedneſs to eternal deſtruction, exempt us from the divine law, as our rule of duty, or from its curſe for every tranſgreſſion. Nor is God obliged in juſtice to grant us any relief: for this law, itſelf, is the rule of juſtice; *holy, juſt and good.* Rom. 7. 12.

Thus

Thus ſtands the matter in the ſacred writings. This *divinity* how *new* ſoever it may appear to thoſe who never before attended to it, was taught of old by Moſes, Deut. 27. And afterwards by the apoſtle Paul, Gal. 3. 10. Or rather the God of Iſrael is the true author of this ſyſtem. It was of old revealed, in the law of Moſes; it was afterwards honoured with the higheſt honours, on the croſs, by the blood of God's own Son. And it was conſidered as fundamental in that ſcheme of religion, which the apoſtles preached and wrote under divine inſpiration. And to be an enemy to this law, is to be an enemy to God himſelf, who is its author, and whoſe image it bears; and to his Son, who died to do it honour.

To ſay, that this law ceaſes to be binding, is to ſay, that God ceaſes to be God, or that we ceaſe to be his creatures. For if God is God, and we are his creatures, we ought to glorify him as God, and pay the honour to him, that creatures owe to their creator, unleſs he has done ſome thing to forfeit our love and obedience, or we ceaſe to be moral agents. But to ſay, that the ſupreme Majeſty of heaven and earth has hurt his character, by any part of his conduct, is to ſay, that he is not an abſolutely perfect Being: which is the ſame, as to ſay, that he is not God. Nor can we throw the blame off from ourſelves, by ſaying, that we ceaſe to be moral agents, without caſting it on our Maker. For either he is to blame for continuing this law in force, armed with its curſe; or we are to blame for breaking this law, and deſerve the threatned woe. And to ſay, that it is not in force, is expreſsly to contradict divine revelation, which ſays, *Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.*——But,

10. For God in his holy law to require holineſs, and nothing but holineſs, of the Chriſtleſs ſinner, and curſe him for the leaſt defect, is inconſiſtent with requiring of him ſome thing beſides holineſs, viz Sin; and promiſ-

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ing by covenant to bleſs him, with great bleſſings, on condition he performs the ſinful action required. For this is to bleſs, and to curſe, the ſame man, at the ſame time, for the ſame action. Thoſe very actions of the Chriſtleſs ſinner, who hath no righteouſneſs, but his own, in which to appear before God, which, by the law he is under juſtly deſerve and really expoſe him to preſent damnation, cannot, at the ſame time, qualify him, in the ſight of the ſame God, (conſidered as ſearcher of hearts) for any bleſſings whatever. For that which merits God's eternal curſe, conſidered in it ſelf, cannot, conſidered in it ſelf, qualify for God's bleſſing: unleſs that which is in it ſelf infinitely odious in the ſight of God, is a meet qualification for a token of the divine favour. Beſides, he who is, by divine conſtitution, at this preſent moment, liable to be ſtruck dead and ſent to hell, without time to breath one breath more, for doing as he does; cannot by divine conſtitution, be entitled to any one bleſſing, by thoſe doings; for this would imply two divine conſtitutions, in their own nature inconſiſtent, both in force at the ſame time, the one curſing, and the other bleſſing, the ſame ſinner, at the ſame time, for the ſame action. Which is the ſame thing, as to ſuppoſe a thing to be, and not to be in the ſame ſenſe, at the ſame time. Which is an expreſs contradiction.

Objection. If this reaſoning is juſt, then God is at liberty to kill and damn all the ungodly now at this preſent time, before the elect are called in; and ſo before Chriſt has *ſeen his ſeed*, and the *travail of his ſoul.* And ſo God was at liberty to have killed and damned every unregenerate ſinner in the congregation of Iſrael, while in Egypt; and ſo the promiſe to Abraham, that at the end of 430 years his ſeed ſhould be brought out of Egypt, might have never been fulfilled. Or he might have killed and damned every unregenerate ſinner, in any period afterwards, and the very anceſtors of the Meſſiah himſelf might have been cut off. And ſo that great promiſe

promiſe to Abraham, *in thy ſeed ſhall all the nations of the earth be bleſſed*, might have never been accompliſhed.

Anſwer. Chriſt Jeſus may have a covenant right to *ſee his ſeed*, and *the travail of his ſoul*; and yet the ſelf-righteous ſinner may be under the curſe of the law, in perfect conſiſtency. Both theſe are ſcripture doctrines, and both are perfectly harmonious. God may not be at liberty, with reſpect to Chriſt Jeſus, to kill and damn every unregenerate ſinner now in the world; becauſe this would be inconſiſtent with his promiſe to him: But yet, with reſpect to unregenerate ſinners themſelves, God is at liberty; becauſe God hath made no promiſe to unregenerate ſinners, as ſuch, by which, they can, any one of them now on earth, claim a covenant right, to an exemption from the curſe of the law, one ſingle moment.

Again,

Abraham might have a covenant right to a poſterity, in number like the ſtars and like the ſands, becauſe God promiſed this to him: And ſo, on the ſame ground, he might have a covenant right to the land of Canaan, and to all the bleſſings compriſed in God's covenant with him; and yet ſuch of his poſterity, as refuſed to walk in his ſteps, and rejected the covenant of grace, and remained under the curſe of the law, might have, for their parts, no covenant right to any one bleſſing; but rather lie expoſed to all the curſes written in God's book. And that, this was in fact the caſe, is plain from the whole tenor of Lev. 26. Deut. 27. and ch. 28.

Now, if theſe things are true, then it will follow,

1. That chriſtleſs ſinners, as they have no covenant right to *any good*, being by the curſe of the law already ſentenced to *all evil*; ſo all the good which they do receive from God, before they are united to Chriſt by faith, are, as to them, the fruits of the mere ſovereign grace of God, which he is at liberty, with reſpect to them, to continue, or take away, at pleaſure. Thus it is, as to life and all the comforts of life. And thus it is, as to all the outward means of ſalvation, and the inward ſtrivings

ſtrivings of the ſpirit. Every chriſtleſs ſinner, being under the curſe of the divine law, God is at full liberty, with reſpect to them, to ſtrike them dead, and ſend them to hell, at any moment; and ſo put an eternal end to *all the good* which they enjoy, and let in *all evil* upon them like a flood.——See this ſentiment illuſtrated at large thro' the 20th chap. of Ezekiel.—And if this is true, then,

2. The carnal, unregenerate, chriſtleſs Iſraelites, under the Moſaic diſpenſation, being under the curſe of their law, agreeable to Deut. 27. 26. and Gal. 3. 10. had, conſidered as ſuch, no covenant right to one bleſſing of the Abrahamic covenant, no, not ſo much as to draw a breath, or live one moment in the promiſed land, where all the peculiar bleſſings of that diſpenſation were to be enjoyed; but God was at full and perfect liberty, with reſpect to them, to ſtrike them dead and ſend them to hell, at any moment; and ſo for ever ſeparate them from that good land, and from all the worldly good things, and religious advantages, which were there to be enjoyed. And on this hypotheſis, and on this hypotheſis alone, can the divine conduct toward that people be vindicated. For in fact he always did ſtrike dead and ſend to hell impenitent ſinners, under that diſpenſation, at what time he pleaſed, according to his own ſovereign pleaſure, juſt as he hath done ever ſince. And that he had a right ſo to do, by the conſtitution which they were under, is evident from Lev. 26. Deut. 27. and chap. 28. and Ezek. 20.

And accordingly we may obſerve, that, by the divine appointment, the whole congregation of Iſrael were obliged to acknowledge this, as ſoon as ever they entered into the holy land, in a moſt public, ſolemn and affecting manner, ſaying, with united voices, Amen. Deut. 27. 2—26. And as ſoon as they entered into the holy land, they did acknowledge it, according to the divine appointment. Joſh. 8. 30---35. So that, while in an impenitent, unpardoned ſtate, they, by their own acknowledgement, were under the curſe of their law, at the

the ſovereign mercy of their God. And thus the Moſaic diſpenſation was *of old* underſtood; but in later ages, the Phariſees, by their falſe gloſſes, put another ſenſe upon their whole law, juſtifying themſelves, & ſupporting their claims of having *God for their father*, whereby the nation were prepared to reject the goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt. Whereas, had they retained the ancient meaning of their law, like a ſchool-maſter, it might have led them to Chriſt.——As this view of things, if agreeable to truth, will, without more ado, ſettle the preſent controverſy; ſo it is worthy of a particular conſideration.

3. No unregenerate Chriſtleſs ſinner hath, as ſuch, any right, in entering into covenant, to promiſe and engage 'to obey the whole will of God *by divine aſſiſtance*' Becauſe they have no title to 'the divine aſſiſtance,' for any one holy act.—Indeed, it is their duty 'to obey the whole will of God;' and they are juſtly liable, in the judgment of him, whoſe judgment is according to truth, to the *curſe* threatened, if they *continue not in all things*; and that on the foot of mere law, which promiſeth no aſſiſtance at all, to any ſinner. And while ſinners reject Chriſt and the grace of the goſpel, they have, by the divine conſtitution, no title, to any inward aſſiſtance of the holy Spirit, at all, on the foot of the covenant of grace. *For all the promiſes of God are in Chriſt Jeſus, yea, and in him amen.* 2 Cor. 1. 20. But as to thoſe who are out of Chriſt, they are *under the law*; and *ſin hath dominion over them.* Rom. 6. 14. This is their ſtanding, and this is their true and real ſtate. They are bound to perfect obedience. They are conſidered as moral agents. They are held to be *without excuſe.* Rom. 1. 21. They ſtand *guilty before God.* Rom. 3. 19. They reject the grace of the goſpel. Eternal death is threatened for every tranſgreſſion, by the divine law. Gal. 3. 10. And the goſpel doth not *make void*, but *eſtabliſh the law.* Rom. 3. 31. As it is written, *he that believeth not is condemned already*, and *the wrath of God abideth on him.* Joh. 3. 18. 36. And ſo every impenitent, Chriſt-rejecting ſinner lies at the

ſovereign mercy of God; as it is written, Rom. 11. 7. *The election hath obtained it, and the reſt were blinded.*

Death and damnation may fill them with terror, and beget reformations, tears, vows and promiſes; and ſo, in the language of the apoſtle, they may *bring forth fruit unto death.* For DEATH coming into the view of their conſciences, begets all the religious exerciſes of their hearts, and is the father of the children they bring forth. And this, according to St. Paul, is the ſtate of all thoſe who are *married to the law.* For *ſin* ſtill *hath dominion over them* while *under the law.* But when once they are *married unto Chriſt*, they become *temples of the Holy Ghoſt*, and ſo now they *bring forth fruit unto God.* God is the father of all the holy exerciſes of their hearts, he *works in them to will and to do*, and ſo all chriſtian graces are not only called, but in reality are, *the fruits of the Spirit.*——Law, death and hell will not beget one holy exerciſe in an unregenerate heart; rather, they will irritate the corruption of the carnal mind. Rom. 7. 5, 8, 9. Hence the ſinner, who, while ignorant of law, death and hell, hath a good heart, as he imagines; when theſe come into view, his goodneſs is loſt, his heart grows worſe; and ſo far as he can diſcern, he grows worſe and worſe, 'till all his hope of acceptance with God, on the foot of law, languiſhes and dies. So that *the law, which was ordained unto life*, and by which life was originally to be obtained, he finds *to be unto death*; as it is written, Rom. 7. 8, 9. *Sin taking occaſion by the commandment*, raged the more, *wrought in me all manner of concupiſcence. For without the law ſin was dead. For I was alive without the law once*, and had a good opinion of myſelf: *but when the commandment came, ſin revived, and I died.* For it is not the deſign of God, by legal conviction to make the heart better, or ſo much as to excite one holy thought, or holy deſire in the unregenerate ſinner; but rather to give ſuch light to the conſcience, as that all thoſe thoughts and deſires, which uſed to be accounted holy, may appear to have no holineſs in them, but to be of a nature contrary

contrary thereunto: to the end, that the ſinner, who is, in fact, dead in ſin, and at enmity againſt God, may come to know the truth; and ſo find himſelf condemned, loſt and undone, by the very law, by which he ſought and expected life. Thus, as by the covenant of works ſinners have no title to any divine aſſiſtance; ſo while unregenerate God doth in fact never aſſiſt them to one holy act. Nor under genuine conviction do they ſeem to themſelves to grow better, but on the contrary to grow worſe and worſe, until they find themſelves perfectly deſtitute of every good thought, and of every good deſire, and in a ſtate of mind, 'wholly oppoſite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil,' in the language of our confeſſion of faith: or in the more accurate and expreſſive language of ſcripture, until they find themſelves *dead in ſin*, and at *enmity againſt God*. i. e. until they ſee themſelves to be, as in fact they are, and as in fact they always were, before they ſaw it.—But to ſee themſelves dead in ſin, and enemies to God, and wholly inexcuſable and altogether criminal in being ſo, and on this foot juſtly condemned, is what, above all things, impenitent, ſelf-juſtifying ſinners are averſe unto. And, therefore, their hearts, inſtead of concurring to promote this conviction, do reſiſt the light, and twiſt and turn every poſſible way to evade it: and often even riſe and fight againſt it, with horrid, blaſphemous thoughts. And it is ſeldom that awakened ſinners are brought to a thorough conviction.* More generally they have ſome partial conviction, and ſome ſhort terrors, and then falſe humiliations, and then falſe light and joy, which laſts awhile, and then all their inward religion is at an end. Or elſe, without receiving any comfort, true or falſe, they gradually looſe their convictions, and go to ſleep again, as ſecure as ever. *For ſtrait is the gate, and narrow is the way, that leads to life, and few their be that find it.*—But to return,

If

* 'It is *not enough* for men to ſee that they can do nothing of 'themſelves. Men may ſay *that*, when they only find need of aſſiſtance, 'and not of the *infuſion of a principle of grace* into them.'

Stoddard's Safety. p. 183. Edit. 3.

If ſelf-righteous, chriſtleſs ſinners, while under the curſe of the law, have no title to divine aſſiſtance for any one holy act; and if, as was before proved, the divine law requires holineſs and nothing but holineſs; then they have no warrant to 'enter into covenant to obey the whole will of God *by divine aſſiſtance.*"—It is true, the goſpel offers pardon to impenitent, ſelf-righteous ſinners, for not continuing in all things written in the book of the law to do them: but impenitent ſelf-righteous ſinners plead NOT GUILTY, in manner and form, as ſet forth in the divine law: and ſo reject the pardon offered.—And it is true, the goſpel offers the ſanctifying influences of the holy ſpirit to impenitent, ſelf-righteous ſinners, to enable them to love that character of God, which is exhibited in his law, and which is honored on the croſs of Chriſt, but they do not deſire to love it, and therefore the aſſiſtance offered is rejected. Now when they have thus rejected the only aſſiſtance, which God ever offered, to obey the very law, which he hath given to be the rule of their lives, for them, under theſe circumſtances, 'to enter into covenant to obey the whole will of God *by divine aſſiſtance,*' is a piece of hypocriſy ſuited to the character of none, but ſuch, as are, in fact, 'totally depraved'; and yet, at the ſame time, near, or quite *totally blind*, as to their true character and real ſtate.

A woman, however poor and low in the world before marriage, and however inſufficient to be truſted by any of her neighbours; yet no ſooner is ſhe married to a rich man, who loves her, and whom ſhe takes delight to obey and honor, but, with his approbation, ſhe may trade largely at any merchant's ſhop, for any thing ſhe needs, and may warrantably promiſe, 'by the aſſiſtance of her huſband,' to make good pay; nor will the merchant, who knows her huſband's riches, and his love to her, and his approbation of her conduct, be backward to truſt her. And thus it is with the poor banckrupt ſinner, who is in himſelf *not ſufficient for one good thought*, as in him there *dwelleth no good thing*, as ſoon as he is marri-

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ed to Chriſt Jeſus, *in whom all fulneſs dwelleth*, and of *whoſe fulneſs he receives, and grace for grace*, he may now enter into covenant with God, and warrantably promiſe 'by the aſſiſtance of Chriſt Jeſus,' to love God, and walk in all his ways with an upright heart.—But ſhould a woman of an whoriſh heart enter into covenant with a man of honor and of a great eſtate, before the prieſt, and as ſoon as the ceremony was over, even on the very ſame day, leave his bed and board, and run off, and proſtitute herſelf to her former gallants, and refuſe to return, and continue to refuſe although invited thereto by her huſband, yea obſtinately refuſe notwithſtanding repeated invitations and repeated offers of pardon and forgiveneſs, until he being juſtly provoked ſhould advertiſe her in all the public papers, and forbid all to truſt her on his account, for that he would hold himſelf unobliged to pay any of her debts, or to afford her 'any aſſiſtance,' until her naughty heart ſhould be humbled, and ſhe ſhould confeſs her iniquity, and juſtify him in this token of his diſpleaſure, and aſk forgiveneſs for her crimes, and return to her duty with true matrimonial affection.—And ſhould ſhe, on ſeeing what her huſband had done, declare, that 'to love ſuch a huſband is the ſame thing as 'to love to be advertiſed as a run-away in the public papers, which is to love diſgrace itſelf, which is in its 'own nature impoſſible, and even contrary to the law of 'God which requires us to love ourſelves. In this 'view, therefore, I can never return, nor is it my duty 'to return. For I ought to have a regard to my own 'reputation. Until, therefore, he will recall this advertiſement, and aſſume a different character, I can no 'more love him than I can love my own miſery.'—And in this temper ſhould ſhe go on, giving her heart to her lovers, and making herſelf common to all comers, until, being overtaken with extreme poverty, ſhe is reduced to great diſtreſs. And then, inſtead of returning to her huſband and humbling herſelf before him, as in duty ſhe is bound, ſhould ſhe apply to her neighbours for relief, and put on a

bold

bold face, and promiſe ; by the aſſiſtance of her huſband' to make good pay : Would they regard her words ! Would they truſt her on his account ! Rather, would they not be filled with indignation at her impudence, and be ready to ſay—'Woman, firſt of all make 'up matters with your huſband, before you preſume to 'be truſted on his account ; for what warrant have you, 'in your preſent circumſtances, to promiſe to make good 'pay *by his aſſiſtance*, to which you have no title, to 'which you know you have no title, and to which the 'public knows you have no title, by the advertiſement 'in the public papers ? No, no, thou wicked woman, 'thy word is not to be taken. Thou art not worth a 'penny in the world. The man whom thou calleſt thy 'huſband, thou haſt run away from, and he declares 'that he will hold himſelf unobliged to pay any of thy 'debts, or to grant thee the leaſt aſſiſtance.'—She cries, ſhe laments bitterly, ſhe ſays, —'I deſire to love him, I 'wiſh I could love him, I long to love him, I try to love 'him, but I cannot. I do all I can to love him, but it is 'above my power. But this I can ſay, that I am willing to *do my utmoſt*, and I am come to *a fixed reſolution* to try every day to love him, and I am willing to 'bind myſelf by the moſt ſolemn covenant to do ſo. 'And more than this, he cannot reaſonably require at 'my hands, in my preſent circumſtances.'———Her huſband happens to ſtand at the door, and hears all the talk, and goes off in high indignation, ſaying to himſelf----'What ! can ſhe find a heart to love her gallants, but no heart to love me ! am I ſo vile in her 'eyes ! is it ſuch an impoſſible taſk to love ſuch an one 'as I am ! is this more than ſhe can do ! is this more 'than I can juſtly require at her hands ! am I to be 'pacified with her hypocritical tears, and deceitful vows ! 'and an unreaſonable man to demand more at preſent ! 'ſhall other men thus have her whole heart, & ſhall I bear 'this contempt at her hands !---far be this from me---- 'I will aſſert my proper dignity---that woman ſhall no 'longer be called my wife----I will get a bill---I will

'put

'' put her away forever.'——— And common ſenſe would approve and juſtify his conduct.

Thus the Moſt High God, whoſe character is perfect in beauty, without a blemiſh, might juſtly reſolve, with reſpect to every impenitent, ſelf-righteous ſelf-juſtifying ſinner. And he might juſtly ſtrike them dead, & ſend them to hell, in a moment. For every plea they make to juſtify themſelves, in not loving God, caſts the blame on him; even every argument they uſe for their juſtification, is to his condemnation. For if the fault is not in them, it is in him. If they are not to blame for not loving him, it is becauſe he is not worthy of their love. For if God is in himſelf, and in all his conduct, abſolutely perfect, even perfect in beauty, without a blemiſh, then we muſt be inexcuſable, and wholly criminal in not loving him with all our hearts. And if there is the leaſt blemiſh in the divine character, or in any part of his conduct, then he is not an abſolutely perfect Being. That is, in other words, he is not God. The divinity of the only true and living God, is, therefore, denied, in every ſelf-juſtifying plea. Which is a crime aggravated beyond expreſſion. A ſinner, therefore, in ſuch a temper, is an enemy to the true God, and juſtifies himſelf in it, and all his pretences to love and obedience are hypocritical: and he ought to be told it, in the plaineſt manner. But to flatter ſinners along in their ſelf-juſtifying, God-condemning diſpoſition, how much ſoever it may pleaſe them at preſent, directly tends to their eternal ruin.— But, thus much is certain, at leaſt, that they have no title to 'any divine aſſiſtance;' and ſo have no warrant to make promiſes as though they had. Nor is their promiſe, in this view of it, of any worth, or at all to be truſted. To conclude,

The profeſſed deſign of Mr. M's firſt book, was, as he declares, p. 58. to prove that there is 'an external covenant between God and his viſible church, as ſuch, diſtinct from the covenant of grace. And that thoſe who are in it, (p. 59) 'have a promiſe of the means of grace, and the ſtrivings

ſtrivings of God's holy Spirit, in order to render them effectual for ſalvation.' And agreeably hereunto, he has in this ſecond book endeavoured to perſuade us, that impenitent, ſelf-righteous, Chriſtleſs ſinners (p. 65, 66.) may warrantably 'while ſuch, and as ſuch, bind themſelves, in covenant 'by divine aſſiſtance to obey the whole will of God.'----Whether what has been offered in the foregoing ſection, is ſufficient to prove, that this external covenant is not from heaven, but of men, is ſubmitted to the conſideration of every judicious reader.—And we are now at liberty more particularly to examine the new ſcheme of religion, which he has advanced in order to ſupport his external covenant, which is to be the principle buſineſs of moſt of the following ſections.

SECTION VI.

Rom. viii. 7. 8. *The carnal mind is enmity againſt God: for it is not ſubject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the fleſh cannot pleaſe God.*

Queſt. I. *Are we, as fallen creatures, at enmity againſt God, merely as conceiving God to be our enemy?* Or,

Queſt. II. *Are we enemies only to falſe and miſtaken ideas of God?* Or,

Queſt. III. *Is the carnal mind enmity againſt God's true and real character, and that notwithſtanding the revelation which God has made of his readineſs to be revealed to us, if we repent and return to him through Jeſus Chriſt?* If ſo,

Queſt. IV. *What contrariety is there between the carnal mind, and God's true and real character?*

ACCORDING to our author, p. 50. 'Adam, after 'the fall, before the revelation of a Mediator,' was not bound by the divine law to love God. The divine law bound him to 'puniſhment' for what was paſt; but 'its binding authority reſpected not his obedience'

dience,' for the time to come. For Adam by the fall ceaſed to be a moral agent. For it now became inconſiſtent with a principle eſſential to moral agency, to love God. For, p. 5. 'a principle of ſelf-love is eſſential to 'us as moral agents.' But, p. 10. 'to delight in God 'under thoſe circumſtances was the ſame thing as to de-'light in his own miſery.' Which is inconſiſtent with that ſelf-love which is eſſential to moral agency. Therefore, p. 10. 'Adam by becoming guilty was totally depraved.' Being totally deprived of his moral agency, and wholly incapacitated for moral conduct. His depravity, however, was not of a criminal nature. For, p. 12. 'this inconſiſtency of love to God, with the natural 'principle of ſelf-love, was the *true reaſon*, and the *only* 'reaſon, why Adam could not love God after the fall.' For, p. 44. 'could he have ſeen, after he had ſinned, 'that he had ſtill the ſame, or as much ground of con-'fidence toward God, as he had before—he would have 'continued ſtill to exerciſe the ſame delight in the divine 'perfections, as he had done before.' So that he was as well diſpoſed to love God after the fall, as he was before, had he been in as good external circumſtances. His different affections were entirely owing to his different external circumſtances. For God was his friend before the fall. But now, p. 9. 'in every view, it muſt 'appear to him, that God could deal no otherwiſe with 'him, but to execute the curſe, unleſs he ſhould act 'contrary to his own perfections.' And therefore as ſoon as God's readineſs to forgive ſin was manifeſted, there was nothing in his heart to prevent his loving God as much as ever. And ſo it is with us. p. 44. 'There 'is all the reaſon why our hearts ſhould return to the 'love of God, and confidence in him thro' Chriſt, as 'why Adam ſhould love God in his primitive ſtate. 'There is nothing in our fallen circumſtances to pre-'vent it.' p. 47, 48. *Without any new principle of grace.* For this being the true ſtate of things, p. 43. 'regeneration may be wrought by light.' For as ſoon as we

believe God's readineſs to be reconciled to us we ſhall love him of courſe.—But before faith and regeneration, we are in the ſame ſtate of total depravity that Adam was before the revelation of a Mediator. p. 18. 'Mankind at this day, antecedent to their exerciſing faith in Chriſt, are in much the ſame condition as Adam was, after he had ſinned.' Particularly, p. 20. 'we are under the ſame inability of loving God that Adam was.' And therefore as it was not Adam's duty to love God after the fall; ſo the unregenerate are not bound in duty to love that character of God, which was exhibited in the moral law given to Adam; for to do ſo, is the ſame thing as to love their own miſery. Which to do is inconſiſtent with moral agency, and 'contrary to the law of God,' which requires us to love ourſelves. p. 41, 42, 43. And the goſpel does not require us to love that character of God, which is exhibited in the moral law, p. 43. 'For the love of God which the goſpel teacheth, 'is love of that divine character which is exhibited to us in a Mediator, and *no other*.'—But this character the unbeliever hath no idea of, and ſo cannot love it. p. 43. 'To ſuppoſe, that the ſoul ſees, and loves this character, 'before a believing view of Chriſt takes place in the 'heart, is to ſuppoſe the ſoul to ſee and not to ſee at the 'ſame time.'—And as we are not moral agents with reſpect to law or goſpel, while unregenerate, and uninlightened, nor bound in duty at preſent to love God, believe, or repent; ſo the external covenant, which requires unregenerate endeavours, and promiſes the ſtrivings of the holy Spirit to render external means effectual to ſalvation, comes in here to our relief. And our 'total depravity,' and our 'enmity againſt God,' not being of a criminal nature, are no bar in the way of our admiſſion to ſealing ordinances. And, therefore, although a man, who ſteals but a ſhilling, and juſtifies himſelf in it, muſt be debarred; yet he who is totally depraved, and an enemy to God, and juſtifies himſelf in it, may be admitted.---This is the ſum of Mr. M's ſcheme.---Now, that

that we, while unregenerate, are moral agents, has been already proved. And the nature of that enmity againſt God, which is in the carnal mind, is to be conſidered in this ſection, which may be done in anſwer to the queſtions propoſed; and then the way will be prepared to conſider the nature of that reconciliation to God, to which the goſpel calls us, which is to be the ſubject of the next ſection. Now, therefore, let us attend to the queſtions.

Queſtion I. *Are we, as fallen creatures, enemies to God, merely, as conceiving God to be our enemy?*

Anſwer. As likeneſs of nature lays the foundation for liking; ſo contrariety of nature is the original ground of diſlike; or that in which enmity radically conſiſts. * And, therefore, our enmity to God does not ariſe merely from conceiving God to be our enemy.——Here let theſe things be conſidered.

1. If our enmity againſt God ariſes merely from conceiving him to be our enemy, if we have no contrariety of heart to God, but what ariſes merely from conceiving that he diſlikes us; then God's diſlike to us muſt have taken

* There are ſome ſinners who do not know enough about God, ſenſibly to love him, or hate him, or to have any exerciſes of heart relative to him. *God is not in all their thoughts.* They never hated him, in their *lives*, they will tell you; nor did they ever feel any love to him, or delight in him. The divine Character, as yet, never came near enough to their view to give them pleaſure or pain. *The fool ſaith in his heart there is no God.* They wonder, therefore, what can be meant by the apoſtle's words, *The carnal mind is enmity againſt God.* Surely, ſay they, he does not mean, that every natural man hates God, for I never hated him in my life. For let our ſinful nature be ever ſo contrary to God's holy nature, yet the contrariety will not be felt until the true and real character of the holy One of Iſrael begins to come into clear view. *For without the law ſin was dead: but when the commandment came, ſin revived.* This contrariety which is between our ſinful nature and God's holy nature, is the thing chiefly intended in the text. And the ſenſe is, *The carnal mind is contrariety to the holy nature of God, as appears from this, that it is not ſubject to that law, which is a tranſcript of God's moral character, neither indeed can be, which proves the contrariety to be total, and fixed. And as is the tree, ſuch is the fruit; ſo then, they that are in the fleſh cannot pleaſe God. For God cannot be pleaſed with what is contrary to his own holy nature. And therefore, upon the whole, to be carnally minded is death.* Which was the point to be proved. See Rom. 8. 6, 7, 8, 9.

taken place while we were perfectly holy. Or our belief that God is our enemy is a groundleſs ſentiment, originally injected into the human mind by the devil, the father of lies, as Mr. *Sandeman* ſuppoſes; but for which, we ſhould naturally love God, be perfectly pleaſed with his character, and from our childhood grow up truly friendly to him. And if either of theſe be true, then,

2. In order to our reconciliation to God, we need not to be born again, we need no change of nature, we only need to believe that God is become our friend: And ſo we may be reconciled to God by this belief. For it is an old maxim, *Remove the cauſe, and the effect will ceaſe.* And in this view the old *Antinomian* ſcheme relative to total depravity and regeneration is conſiſtent.—This faith, therefore, is the firſt act. And by this faith we are regenerated: That is, a belief of God's love to us, removes the grounds of our enmity to him, and begets love, repentance, and every chriſtian grace.

Mr. *Sandeman*'s ſcheme, which is nothing elſe than the old *Antinomian* ſcheme refined, and dreſt up in a new attire, teaches, that the truth to be believed, in juſtifying faith, is, 'that there is forgiveneſs with God thro' the atonement for impenitent ſinners.' A belief of this begets hope, and love, and repentance, and every chriſtian grace. For on his ſcheme, *forgiveneſs takes place before repentance*, as it does neceſſarily on the *Antinomian* ſcheme, whatever ſhape it aſſumes. For on this ſcheme, as our enmity againſt God ariſes from conceiving God to be our enemy; ſo our love ariſes from conceiving God to be our friend. And therefore we muſt firſt of all conceive God to be our friend, before love can exiſt: And ſo before repentance can exiſt. And ſo juſtification muſt neceſſarily take place, before repentance. This is a difficulty which neither the more ancient, or the later *Antinomian* writers know how to get rid of.

And thus faith, even that faith by which we are juſtified, takes place, in order of nature, before regeneration. For it is the cauſe of it. But the cauſe, in order of nature,

ture, is always before the effect. But if faith takes place before regeneration, it is, in its own nature, not a holy, but a graceleſs, unregenerate act. For it is the act of a graceleſs, unregenerate heart. And ſo faith is not 'a ſaving *grace*, but a *ſaving ſin*.—But can we be *married* to a *holy* Saviour by an *unholy act?* By an act, in its own nature, *perfectly oppoſite to his mediatorial character?* Can we *receive* Chriſt by an act of *rejection?* Can we be *united* to Chriſt by an act of *diſunion?* Can we become *one* with Chriſt by *an act of ſin*?—Perhaps, it may be thought that Mr. *Sandeman* gets rid of this difficulty, by teaching, that faith is not *an act*; that there is no volition, or exerciſe of heart implied in it. But nothing is gained, if while we avoid one difficulty, we run upon another as great.

For, if it is not *an act*; if no volition or exerciſe of heart is implied in it, then we are *married to Chriſt*, 'without our conſent;' juſt as Mr. Mather ſuppoſes that the Iſraelites, on the plains of Moab, were taken into covenant, 'without their conſent.' But this is inconſiſtent with the very notion of marriage; which is a tranſaction, which implies the mutual conſent of both parties. And, therefore, on this ſcheme, the marriage union, as it takes place among mankind, could not be uſed, with any propriety, to repreſent our union to Chriſt by faith. For if the ſoul is *married* to Chriſt at all, the conſent of our hearts muſt be implied. Or to uſe Mr. *Stoddard*'s words, 'When the ſoul *marries to Chriſt*, he doth it with a ſpirit 'of love.—This act of faith doth include all other gra-'ces.—It is virtually all grace.' *Nature of converſion*, p. 19---24. See Rom. 7. 4. 2 Cor. 11. 2. Eph. 5. 29, 30 Joh. 16. 27.---But can we be married to Chriſt by an act of ſin? But if juſtifying faith is the act of an unregenerate heart, dead in ſin, totally depraved, then it is *an act of ſin*. For as is the tree, ſuch is the fruit; as is the fountain, ſuch are the ſtreams; as is the heart, ſuch are its acts.——Beſides,

If juſtifying faith is the act of an unregenerate ſinner, then it is the act of an impenitent ſinner. And then

pardon

pardon is, in order of nature, before repentance. And ſo it is not neceſſary, that we repent of our ſins, in order to our being forgiven. Which is contrary to the whole tenor of ſcripture, and to the plaineſt and moſt expreſs declarations of Almighty God. Pray, reader, ſtop a minute, take your bible, and turn to, and read, Lev. 26. 40, 41, 42. 1 Kin. 8. 47---50. Pſal. 32. 3, 4, 5. Prov. 28. 13. Iſai. 55. 7. Jer. 4. 4. Ezek. 18. 30, 31, 32. Luk. 3. 3. and 5. 31, 32. and 13. 5. and 24. 47. Act. 2. 37, 38. and 3. 19. and 5. 31. and 10. 21. And then lay your hand on your heart, and ſay,---Does God offer to pardon impenitent ſinners while ſuch? Did the Son of God die that pardon might be granted to impenitent ſinners, as ſuch? Or can God, conſiſtent with the goſpel, forgive the impenitent, while ſuch, and as ſuch, any more than if Chriſt never had died? If any doctrine tends to delude ſinners, it is this, that they may expect pardon without repentance. They have no heart to repent; they wiſh to eſcape puniſhment; they hope they ſhall eſcape: if they can believe that they ſhall eſcape, it will give them joy. This doctrine is ſuited to give joy to an impenitent heart. But to teach impenitent ſinners, that they may expect pardon without *répentance toward God*, is as contrary to ſcripture, as it is to teach them, that they expect pardon without *faith toward our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*. This doctrine of *pardon before repentance* had been taught; yea, it had ſpread far and wide. This occaſioned *the aſſembly of divines at Weſtminſter* expreſsly to aſſent the contrary. *Confeſſion of faith*, chap. xv. 'Repentance is of ſuch ne-'ceſſity to all ſinners, that none may expect pardon 'without it.'——In fine,

If the firſt act of juſtifying faith is an unregenerate, graceleſs, ſinful act; ſo are all ſucceeding acts of the ſame faith. And if ſo, then to *live a life of faith on the Son of God*, as the holy apoſtle Paul ſays, he did, Gal. 2. 20. is to live a life of unregenerate, graceleſs, ſinful acts. For it is an agreed point, that the firſt act, and the ſucceeding acts of juſtifying faith are of the ſame nature and kind.

kind. And ſo a life of faith, is a life of ſin; a courſe of unregenerate, graceleſs acts. And this graceleſs faith will bring forth ſelfiſh, graceleſs fruits. All our love and joy will ariſe merely from ſelf-love; in a belief, that our ſins are pardoned, and that God loves us. The holineſs, juſtice and goodneſs of the divine nature, exhibited in that law, which is holy, juſt and good, (Rom. 7. 12.) which Chriſt loved and honored, living and dying; inſtead of appearing perfect in beauty, without a blemiſh, in our eyes, can never be thought of with pleaſure. We never can ſay with *David*, *O, how love I thy law! It is my meditation all the day.* Pſal. 119. 97. In a word, as our faith is of the *Antinomian* kind; ſo our whole hearts will be all over *Antinomian.*---No wonder, 'ninety nine in a hundred' of ſuch converts are in the dark about their good eſtate; and feal as much need of an external, graceleſs covenant, as tho' they never had been converted.

A late writer, in order to prove, '*fide nos regenerari*, that we are regenerated by faith,' quotes Gal. 3. 26. *Ye are all the children of God by faith in Jeſus Chriſt.* But this text ſpeaks not of *regeneration*, but of *adoption.* Again he refers to Joh. 6. 53. *Except ye eat of the fleſh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.* Juſt as if *eating and drinking* were acts of the *dead*, and not of the *living.* Juſt as if the *dead* might eat and drink, while they are dead, and by ſo doing be made alive. However, this is certain, that, that is a dead corpſe, and not a living man, which neither eats nor drinks. He who does not live a life of faith in Chriſt, is dead in ſin. Yet, ſtill *repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, are acts of ſpiritual life, and not of ſpiritual death.

However, it is granted, that there is a kind of faith, which may be exerciſed by a graceleſs, unregenerate, impenitent ſinner. For ſuch an one, altho' he rejects Chriſt Jeſus with his whole heart, yet he may firmly believe that God loves him, and that his ſins are forgiven, and be raviſhed in this belief.---But the thing believed is a lie. And all the affections which reſult from this belief

are

are founded in deluſion.—And yet, this is the very thing which is ſometimes called *regeneration by faith*, and *beholding the glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt*. And it was one chief deſign of Preſident *Edwards's treatiſe concerning religious affections*, to ſhew the difference between true religion and this kind of deluſion.—But to return.

3. If a belief that God is become our friend, without any change of nature, will reconcile us to God, then ſatan, *transformed into an angel of light*, is able to do the buſineſs. For when the ſinner is terrified with the thoughts of death and hell, ſatan can bring to his mind ſuch texts as theſe, *Son, be of good chear, thy ſins are forgiven thee. O, thou of little faith, wherefore doſt thou doubt!* And at the ſame time ſtrike the ſinner's imagination with a view of heaven, of God upon a throne, of Chriſt ſitting at his right hand, till every doubt is baniſhed, and until the ſinner cries out in tranſport, *I believe. I believe.*——And,

4. If our enmity againſt God ariſes only from conceiving God to be our enemy, then all thoſe graceleſs deluded ſinners, who believe that God loves them, are truly regenerate. That is, the love to God, which they experience, in this belief, is true love. For, as the cauſe of our enmity is believing God to be our enemy; ſo in every inſtance where the cauſe is removed the effect will ceaſe. But in all deluded ſinners, who believe that God loves them, the ſuppoſed cauſe of enmity is removed, and accordingly they really think that they love God.—Thus groſs *Socinians*, who deny the eternity of hell torments, who believe the univerſal ſalvation of devils and damned, and in this belief view God as the friend of the whole intelligent ſyſtem, all made up of love to his creatures, do, in this view of his character, love him, and ſo are all of them, on this ſcheme, truly reconciled to God. Rather, theſe men, if they were inſtructed in theſe principles from their childhood, and believed them, were never totally depraved. For they always loved God. And accordingly we find they univerſally deny the doctrine of total depravity; and ſay, that it is natural for all

all mankind to love God; and that, in fact, they all would love him, were his true and real character brought into their view. And so would the devils too, on this scheme, were the divine character what the *Socinians* suppose it to be. And while *Socinians* love God, viewed as they view him; *Antinomians*, of the grossest sort, whose faith professedly consists, in a belief, that God loves them, are often full of love to God, in this view of him. And why may not *Socinians* and *Antinomians* have charity for each other? For their schemes are not so different in reality, as in appearance. For both look upon God as a lovely being; and both love him; and both profess to love him 'for the transcendent excellency of his perfections.' The one does this, because God loves all, and so loves him; the other, because, altho' God does not love all, yet he loves him in particular. And why is not the love of the one, of as good a kind, as the love of the other? And the Pharisees, concerning whom Christ declared, that *the love of God was not in them*, Joh. 5. 42. And who hated and crucified the Son of God, ought also to be received to charity, on this scheme; for they really believed that God was their father and their friend, and in this belief, they experienced this kind of love, of which we are speaking.—Yea, our charity ought to be more extensive still, for,

5. On this scheme they who are totally depraved, have as much of a principle of grace, as they that are regenerate. That is, sinners are at heart as well disposed to love God, before regeneration, as after. For after regeneration they are disposed to love God only considered as one that loves them; and before regeneration they are disposed to love God considered and viewed in this light. For it is written, *Sinners love those that love them*; and they need no *new principle of grace* to incline them to it. And so the unregenerate only need *light* to see that God loves them; and could they but have this *light* they would love God as much as others. And, therefore,

6. On this scheme, satan's charge against *Job*, that he

was at heart no better than other men, was true and juſt; and the high commendation which God had given of him, that there was *none like him in the earth*, was without reaſon. *And the Lord ſaid unto Satan, Haſt thou conſidered my ſervant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and eſcheweth evil? Then Satan anſwered the Lord, and ſaid, Doth Job fear God for nought? Haſt thou not made an hedge about him, and about his houſe, and about all that he hath on every ſide? Thou haſt bleſſed the work of his hands, and his ſubſtance is increaſed in the land.* As if he had ſaid, 'no wonder he 'loves God, while God is ſo full of love and kindneſs 'to him. And who is there under the like circum-'ſtances, that would not love God as much as he does?' *But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curſe thee to thy face*; 'juſt as we fallen ſpirits 'have done, ever ſince we were turned out of heaven. 'And therefore this Job, who is commended as *a none ſuch*, 'has in reality no more grace in his heart than we have.' And if the enmity of fallen creatures againſt God ariſes only from conceiving him to be their enemy, and their love only from conceiving God to be their friend, Satan's reaſoning was juſt. All Job's ſeeming ſuperior goodneſs was entirely owing to the more abundant tokens of the divine love; and therefore he would have turned to be like the devil, in an inſtant, if God had only *touched all that he had*. He would have *curſed God to the face*.——Indeed,

7. On this ſcheme, Adam had no more grace before the fall than he had after; but his different affections toward the Deity were entirely owing to the different external circumſtances which he was under. For, on this ſcheme, before the fall God loved him, and ſo he loved God; and after the fall, had God continued to love him, he would have continued to love God alſo. For the 'true reaſon and the only reaſon' why Adam could not love God after the fall, was becauſe, as he thought, God was become his irreconcilable enemy. As ſoon as he found out his miſtake, and perceived that God was ready

dy to be reconciled, he returned to the love of his Maker, without any 'new principle of grace.' Before the fall, that principle of ſelf-love, which, according to Mr. M. was 'eſſential to him as a moral agent'—'naturally inclined him to love God with all his heart as his greateſt good.' And after the fall, this ſame principle did as naturally incline him to hate God with all his heart as his greateſt evil. p. 9. His love and his hatred aroſe from the very ſame principle. And his different affections were entirely owing to his different external circumſtances. As ſoon, therefore, as his external circumſtances were altered, and God became friendly again, he immediately returned to the love of God, without any new principle of grace; 'there was nothing in his fallen circumſtances to prevent it,' according to Mr. M. Adam, therefore, on this ſcheme, had no more grace before the fall than after. It is true, the fall made an alteration in his external circumſtances, which different external circumſtances occaſioned different affections; even as it was with the Iſraelites at the red ſea, when Pharaoh and his hoſts were drowned, and their expectations of a proſperous journey to the land of Canaan were raiſed very high, they were full of love, and joy, and praiſe: but three days after, when they came to the waters of *Marah*, they *murmured*: and that from the ſame principle, from which they before rejoyced. It is true, they had different affections toward God at theſe different times; but 'the true and only reaſon' was, their different external circumſtances, for they had no more grace at the one time, than at the other. And thus it was with Adam, on Mr. M's ſcheme.—Yea—

8. On this ſcheme, there is no eſſential difference between the nature of ſatan, and the nature of Gabriel; but their different affections, and different conduct, ariſe merely from the different external circumſtances which they are in. For there is no higher principle than ſelf-love in either. The one looks on God as an enemy, and ſo hates him, merely in that view. And the other looks upon

God

God as a friend, and ſo loves him, merely in that view. And thus their natures are exactly alike, and their different affections and conduct ariſe merely from the different external circumſtances, which they are under. And thus ſatan ſtands juſtified in his enmity againſt God; and thus the holy angels are degraded to a level with devils. For ſatan might ſay, 'to love 'God, in my circumſtances would be to love my own 'miſery: but to take delight in miſery, to take pleaſure 'in pain, is a contradiction; and is in its own nature 'impoſſible. Therefore, I am not to blame. And as 'to the angels, who dwell in heaven, *do they fear God for 'nought*, in the paradiſe above, ſurrounded with every 'bleſſing? Far from it. *But let God put forth his hand 'now, and touch all that they have, and they will curſe him 'to his face*, juſt as we do.'

Thus much in anſwer to the firſt queſtion: and to prepare the way for the ſecond, we may obſerve that Mr. M. ſays, ſpeaking of Adam, after the fall, p. 9. 'In every view it muſt appear to him, that God could deal no 'otherwiſe with him, but to execute the curſe, unleſs he 'ſhould act contrary to his divine and glorious perfections.' And p. 10. 'To delight in God in this caſe was 'the ſame thing as to delight in his own miſery.' And p. 12 'This was the true reaſon, and the only reaſon, 'why Adam could not love God after the fall.'——But Adam ſoon found he was miſtaken; for it ſoon appeared that God knew how to open a way to pardon ſinners, 'conſiſtent with his divine and glorious perfections.'—Therefore,

Queſtion II. *Are we, as fallen creatures, enemies only to falſe and miſtaken ideas of the Deity?*

Anſwer. If we are enemies *only* to falſe and miſtaken ideas of the Deity, then it will follow, that we have no enmity againſt God's true and real character, even *none at all*; but rather are in a diſpoſition to love it, as ſoon as known. Nor ſhall we need any inward influence of the holy Spirit, at all, to diſpoſe us to the knowledge of it; for

we ſhall not be averſe to the knowledge of it, as not being at all prejudiced againſt it. In this caſe, we ſhall not hate the light, but love and receive it with all our hearts, of our own accord. And therefore if the external manifeſtations of God's true character are ſufficiently clear, we ſhall know it, and we ſhall love it. And, on this hypotheſis, had God given mankind, from the beginning of the world, an external exhibition of his true character, ſufficiently full and plain, all mankind would have known and loved him, from the beginning of the world. So that the great and general depravity of mankind, and the wickedneſs which hath overſpread the earth, in all ages, have been entirely owing to God's not giving a ſufficient external revelation of his true and real character to the children of men. But they are not to blame for this. If there be any blame at all, it lies at his door, who hath neglected to let his true and real character be known. For had he but revealed it to mankind, they having no prejudice againſt it, but being naturally diſpoſed to love it, would of courſe have attended to the revelation with good and honeſt hearts, and would have underſtood it, and have brought forth fruit accordingly. How to juſtify the divine conduct, in this view of things, I do not know. Nor can I tell how to juſtify the conduct of Moſes and the prophets, of Chriſt Jeſus and his apoſtles, who were commiſſioned to reveal God's true character to men, in ſuffering both God, and themſelves for his ſake, to be hated, when things, if this ſcheme is true, were ſo circumſtanced, that if they had but plainly told the truth, all would have underſtood it, believed it, loved and obeyed it; and they would have been the moſt univerſally beloved, of any perſons in the world. If mankind, with reſpect to God's true and real character, ſtand affected, as Mr. *Sandeman* repreſents, even as the inhabitants of an iſland periſhing with hunger do, with reſpect to a large importation of corn, the news of which would ſpread like lightning from end to end of the iſland, and give hope and joy to all the inhabitants at once, then had

Jeſus

Jeſus of Nazereth and his apoſtles plainly revealed the Father's character to mankind, the news would have ſpread over the earth, & would have filled the world with joy; and theſe bringers of good tydings had been the delight of all nations.—Why then did they ſuffer themſelves to be hated, perſecuted, murdered, for nothing!--Yea, for worſe than nothing!--even for ſecreting the true and real character of God, which they were ſent expreſsly to reveal.

To ſay, that they did plainly reveal God's true and real character, but mankind did not underſtand them right; is to ſay, that either the revelation was not on a level with the natural capacities of mankind, and ſo was not plain enough, not ſo plain as it ought to have been to anſwer the end; and ſo theſe divine teachers were blame-worthy: or elſe their not underſtanding the revelation aright muſt be owing to their being at enmity againſt God's true and real character, which was revealed. For if the revelation was plain enough, and if they had no prejudice to blind their minds, they muſt have underſtood it. Nothing could have prevented a right underſtanding of the revelation but bad and diſhoneſt hearts, by which they were inclined to hate the light and truth itſelf. For every good and honeſt heart would have underſtood the revelation, believed and loved it, and brought forth fruit. Luk. 8. 15.—We therefore proceed,

Queſtion III. *Is the carnal mind enmity againſt God's true and real character; and that notwithſtanding the plain and moſt expreſs revelation, which God has made of his readineſs to be reconciled to us, if we repent and return to him thro' Jeſus Chriſt?*

Anſwer. If God would forgive us without repentance, we ſhould like him: As, in this, he would yield us every point in conteſt, and, implicitly, take the whole blame to himſelf. Or, in other words, if God would give up his law, we would give up our enmity againſt him; as in this, he would do as we would have him do, and, implicitly, become altogether ſuch an one as we are. Or, which amounts to the ſame thing, if God will give up

that

that character of himself exhibited in the moral law, and allow us to hate it, and yet love us, then we will like him; as in this, he would justify us in our wickedness. But if he asserts his own dignity, abides by his law, and vindicates the honor of his character exhibited in it, and obliges us from the heart to acknowledge him to be wholly right and ourselves to be wholly wrong, to repent, and take the whole blame to ourselves, and ask forgiveness as of mere grace thro' Jesus Christ, then his character will not suit a carnal mind. In a word, if God will forgive us without repentance, then we can love him without any change of nature; but otherwise our enmity will remain. For his offering pardon, in the name of Christ, upon repentance, will not pacify the heart of an impenitent, self-justifying sinner, and enduce him to become a willing and obedient subject to the divine government.

Before the foundation of the world, the fall of man being foreseen, God had contrived a method, in which he might consistently with his perfections, pardon and receive to favour the true penitent. And no sooner had man fallen, but he revealed his designs of mercy to our first parents, that they might inform their posterity; and instituted sacrifices as a shadow of the great atonement. So that all mankind were under sufficient external advantages from the beginning of the world, to have known, that *God is, and that he is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him.* And yet soon it came to pass not only that *Cain* slew his brother, but that *the whole earth was filled with violence.*

After the flood, mankind, in a body, soon cast off the true God, and idolatry spread over the face of the earth. *For they did not like to retain God in their knowledge.* At this time, that he might not leave himself without witness, God took one nation, and set them up as a beacon on a hill, in the sight of all the nations; and to them, in the sight of all the world around them, he exhibited his true and real character, and laid them under every possi-

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ble obligation to love him, and to walk in his ways, that they might be to him, *for a people, and for a name, and for a praiſe, and for a glory*, in the ſight of all the nations; that they might yet have opportunity to return to the true God; but the nations around hated the God of Iſrael, and even the Iſraelites *would not hear*. Jer. 13. 10. Yea, the Iſraelites caſt off their God, whom they did not like, and joined with the heathen around them, in the worſhip of *Baal*, *Aſhtaroth* and *Dagon*, gods whom they did like; and this notwithſtanding God himſelf uſed all external means that were proper, and the moſt wiſely adapted, to induce them to love him, and to walk in his ways, from the day he took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, always giving them the higheſt aſſurances of his readineſs to forgive all paſt offences, and in the higheſt ſenſe to be a God to them, if they would walk in his ways indeed, but *they would not hear*. So that after the experiments of many ages, and a great variety of means contrived and uſed by infinite wiſdom, God was at length obliged to caſt them off. But not until he had tried every external means, which, with propriety, could be tried. Not 'till he could ſay, *What more could have been done to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?* For he ſent unto them all his ſervants the prophets, riſing early and ſending; and they ſtoned one, and killed another. At laſt he ſent to them his only Son, and they ſlew him. And in them we have exhibited a true ſpecimen of human nature, in its preſent fallen ſtate. ‡

Since

‡ 'As face anſwereth to face in water, ſo doth the heart of man to 'man.—If they were in *Cain*'s circumſtances, and God ſhould ſuffer 'them, they would do as he did. If they were in *Pharaoh*'s circum'ſtances, and left of God, they would be as cruel, falſe and hard'hearted as he. If they were in the like circumſtances with *Doeg*, 'though they condemn him for his hypocriſy, flattery and cruelty, 'they would do every whit as bad as he, if they were in like circum'ſtances as *Judas* was, whatever indignation they have againſt him, 'they would be as falſe, and impudent, and as very traitors as he. 'Yea, if they were under the circumſtances that the *fallen angels* are, 'they would be as *very devils* as they.——That original ſin that 'reigns in every natural man is the fountain of every abomination.'

Mr. Stoddard'. *Nature of converſion*. p. 95, 96.

Since the Jews have been caſt off, God has ſent the goſpel to the Gentiles, and for ſeventeen hundred years has been making experiments on them, as of old he did on the Jews; and ſuch has been their oppoſition to God and Chriſt and Chriſtianity in all ages, that, agreeable to revelation made to *John* in the *Iſle of Patmos*, the true church of Chriſt hath been in circumſtances, either like *a woman in travail, with a great red dragon before her, ready to devour her child as ſoon as born*; or like *a woman obliged to flee, as upon eagles wings, into a wilderneſs to hide herſelf from the face of the dragon.* Rev. 12; or like *two witneſſes propheſying in ſackcloth*, who *are killed* from age to age, for the teſtimony they bear to God and the truth, and in whoſe ſufferings *they that dwell upon the earth rejoyce.* Rev. 11. And now, after a courſe of the moſt obſtinate rebellion, for almoſt ſix thouſand years, it is become a queſtion among us rebels and enemies, whether we are at enmity againſt God's true and real character, or not! After we have caſt off the true God, and ſet up falſe gods all over the earth—after we have ſtoned the meſſengers of God, and killed his prophets, and murdered his Son—and after his followers have, according to his prediction, been *hated of all men for his name's ſake.*—Even now, after all theſe exerciſes and fruits of enmity, it is become a queſtion, whether we are, or ever were, properly and ſtrictly ſpeaking, enemies to God's true and real character!—So ſlow of heart are we to underſtand our own true character and real ſtate.—But that the carnal mind is enmity againſt God's true and real character, may be proved by theſe arguments, viz.

1. If the carnal mind is enmity againſt God himſelf, then the carnal mind is enmity againſt God's true and real character: But the carnal mind is enmity againſt God himſelf: as is aſſerted by the inſpired apoſtle. For he ſays, *The carnal mind is enmity againſt God.* But to be enmity againſt falſe and miſtaken notions of the Deity, is not to be enmity againſt God. For to hate falſehood is not to hate the truth. To hate falſe gods, is not to

hate the true God. But that Being whom Paul called God, was the true God. To deny this, is to give up the whole of divine revelation. To ſay, that Paul's God was not the true God, is, to ſay, that the God of the bible is not the true God.

2. That which is oppoſite unto a true and real tranſcript of the moral character of God, is oppoſite to his true and real character: But the carnal mind is oppoſite unto the divine law, which is a true and real tranſcript of the moral character of God. This is the apoſtle's argument. For in order to prove that the carnal mind is enmity againſt God, he ſays, *for it is not ſubject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.*

3. To be at enmity againſt falſe and miſtaken notions of God is no ſin, and deſerves no puniſhment; but rather is virtuous and praiſe-worthy: for even God himſelf hates all falſe gods, and all miſtaken notions about the true God. But if the ſcripture account of things be true, that enmity againſt God and Chriſt, which mankind have diſcovered, is the moſt inexcuſable wickedneſs: for it is ſpoken of by our bleſſed Saviour, as ſuch, Mat, 10. 16. 25. and chap. 23. 29—36. Joh. 15. 22—25. And, as ſuch, it deſerves the wrath of God. Luk. 19. 27. *But thoſe mine enemies, which would not that I ſhould reign over them, bring heither, and ſlay them before me.* Beſides, had not the Phariſees been at enmity againſt the true and real character of God and of his Son, and inexcuſably to blame on that account, thoſe words of Chriſt to them, had been very abuſive. Mat. 23. 33. *Yea ſerpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye eſcape the damnation of hell?* But if they were as venomous as ſerpents, and as ſpightful as vipers, toward the true God and his Son, the damnation of hell was good enough for them.

Remark I. If the carnal mind is enmity only againſt miſtaken ideas of God, but diſpoſed to love God's true and real character, as ſoon as known, then nothing more is needful to bring us to love God perfectly, even with all our hearts, than a right ſpeculative idea of him, commonly

ly called, doctrinal knowledge, or head knowledge. For if we are naturally disposed to love God's true character, then, as soon as we know it, we shall love it, just as Jacob loved Rachel, the first time he saw her. And our love will, on this hypothesis, increase, in exact proportion to our doctrinal knowledge. And we shall need the regenerating influences of the holy Spirit, to give us an heart to love God, no more than Jacob did, to give him an heart to love Rachel. An external revelation of God's true character, sufficiently clear and plain, is all that will be needful to beget perfect love to God in our hearts. And then we may be regenerated, and perfectly sanctified by light, without any internal influences of the Spirit of God at all. And this is what *Pelagians* and *Socinians* really mean.

Rem. 2. If the carnal mind is enmity against God only as conceiving him to be our enemy, as one who will damn us; then a belief that he is our friend, and will save us, will cause our enmity to cease, and beget love, without any change of nature in us. And then again, we may be regenerated by light. And this is what *Antinomians* really mean. And were there any evidence *from scripture, sense or reason*, of the fact to be believed, *no spirit* would be needed in this case. But because there is *no evidence from scripture, sense or reason*, as the celebrated Mr. *Marshal* honestly owns, therefore *some spirit* is needed. But not the Spirit of God. For it is not the office of the Spirit of God, to enable us to believe, *that to be true, which was not true before we believed it.* But God is not our reconciled friend while out of Christ. Nor does pardon ever take place before repentance. When the unregenerate impenitent sinner has it discovered to him, that God loves him, and is reconciled to him, the thing discovered is a lie; and the father of lies is the author of the discovery. But of this heretofore, in *A blow at the root of the refined Antinomianism of the present age.*

Rem. 3. If the carnal mind is enmity against God's true and real character, as exhibited in the moral law, and as honoured

honoured with the higheſt honors on the croſs of Chriſt, notwithſtanding the fulleſt and plaineſt declarations of God's readineſs to be reconciled to us thro' Chriſt, if we repent and return to God thro' him, then the cleareſt poſſible ſpeculative idea of this character, will not beget love, the greateſt poſſible degree of doctrinal knowledge will not render God amiable in our eyes. For if the true and real character of God itſelf is odious to a carnal heart, the idea of that character will excite, not love, but diſlike: If the true & real character of Jeſus was odious to the heart of a Phariſee, the idea of that character would excite, in the Phariſees heart, not love, but diſlike. So reaſon teaches. And ſo the fact was, *They have both ſeen and hated both me and my Father*. The longer Chriſt lived, the more he preached, the plainer he ſpake, the more the Phariſees hated him. For his character was perfectly oppoſite to theirs. But every impenitent, ſelf-righteous ſinner hath the heart of a Phariſee. Therefore Chriſt's words to Nicodemus are equally true with reſpect to all mankind in their natural ſtate. John 3. 3. *Except a man be born again, he cannot ſee the kingdom of God.*—For,

Rem. 4. Spiritual life is, according to ſcripture, communicated by God to the dead ſoul, to enable it to ſee and act in a ſpiritual manner. For, according to ſcripture, we are *dead in ſin*; as perfectly dead, as the body of Chriſt was when it lay in the grave. And the ſame power which raiſed that from the dead, doth raiſe us from ſpiritual death. Eph. 1. 19—23. and 2. 1—10. And we know, that a dead corpſe muſt be reſtored to life, in order of nature, before it can ſee or hear. So the ſcripture teaches us, that ſpiritual life is neceſſary to enable us to ſee and act in a ſpiritual manner. For thoſe who are ſpiritually dead are ſpiritually *blind*. They cannot *diſcern*, they cannot *know* ſpiritual things, *ſpiritually*. 1 Cor. 2. 14. They are *fooliſhneſs* to them, and a *ſtumbling-block*. 1 Cor. 1. 18, 23, 24. As the *vail on Moſes face* hid *the glory* of it from the congregation of Iſrael; (Exod. 34. 29—35.) ſo the ſpiritual glory of God and the things of God are hid

hid from the natural man by a *vail on his heart*. 2 Cor. 3. 13—18. For that enmity to divine things, in which ſpiritual death conſiſts, implies ſpiritual blindneſs. Rom. 8. 7. Eph. 4. 18. For an idea of the glory of God is always attended with love to God. 2 Cor. 3. 18. Enmity againſt God, therefore, implies that we are blind to his glory: yea, that his true and real character inſtead of appearing glorious, and giving pleaſure to the mind, appears odious, and excites diſagreeable and painful ſenſations. Rom. 1. 28. Joh. 15. 18---25. It is not the deſign of the goſpel to accomodate the divine character to the taſte of the carnal heart. Rom. 3. 31. But on the contrary, the fleſh muſt die; it muſt be put to death; it muſt be *crucified*. Gal. 5. 17---24. And a new, divine, ſpiritual life muſt be communicated to the ſoul, to enable it to ſee and act in a ſpiritual manner. For Joh. 3. 3, 5. *Except a man be born again he cannot ſee*, nor *enter into the kingdom of God*. He muſt be born again, or he cannot ſee the glory of chriſtianity, or cordially embrace it. A man may be a Phariſee, as was Nicodemus; ſo a man may be a *Socinian*, a *Pelagian*, an *Arminian*, or an *Antinomian*, without regeneration: but no man can be a chriſtian *except he be born again*. Experience and fact confirm the truth. For when Chriſt was on earth *he ſpake as never man ſpake*; and yet the ſpiritual glory of chriſtianity was hid from their eyes. Mat. 11. 20---25. For altho' *he came*, not to thoſe who had been bred up in pagan darkneſs, but *to his own* people, who had received their education under Moſes and the prophets; yet *his own received him not*. Not one *received him*, not one *believed in his name*, but ſuch as *were born of God*. Joh. 1. 11, 12, 13. So that it was indeed a univerſal maxim among the apoſtolic converts, *That whoſoever believeth that Jeſus is the Chriſt*, (not *will be*, but *gegenetai*) *hath been born of God*. 1 Joh. 5. 1. For this word, in this tenſe, ever hath this ſignification, in the writings of this apoſtle, as every man of learning may ſee, who will look into the original. See 1 Joh. 2. 19. and 3. 9. and 4. 7. and 5. 1,

4.

4, 18. and Joh. 8. 41. and 9. 32.---None therefore, but thoſe to whom *good and honeſt hearts* are thus given, *underſtand the word, and bring forth fruit.* Ezek. 36. 26, 27. Luk. 8. 12---15. But theſe *all with open face (the vail* being taken off) *beholding as in a glaſs the glory of the Lord, are changed into the ſame image.* 2 Cor. 3. 13---18. For the truth being ſpiritually underſtood, i. e. ſeen in its glory, is cordially believed. 2 Cor. 4. 3---6. And the truth being ſeen in its glory and believed produces every anſwerable effect in heart and life. Joh. 17. 17. 1 Cor. 4. 15. 1 Pet. 1. 3, 23. Jam. 1. 18. Thus this matter is repreſented in the ſacred writings. A more particular explanation of this ſubject may be ſeen, *Eſſay on the nature and glory of the goſpel,* ſect. XII. The nature of that *ſpiritual life* which is communicated in regeneration, and how *it opens the eyes* to ſee *the beauty of God's moral character,* is explained with great accuracy, by that great philoſopher, and eminent divine, Preſident *Edwards,* in his *Diſſertation on the nature of true virtue,* p. 121, 122, 123, 124, 125.

Queſtion IV. *What contrariety is there between the carnal mind, and God's true and real character?*

Anſwer. Without entering largely into this queſtion, on which a volume might be written, it will be ſufficient for the preſent purpoſe, only to ſay, that the contrariety between the carnal mind and God's true and real character, is the ſame, as is the contrariety between ſin and holineſs. For the contrariety between God's nature and ours ariſes merely from this, viz. that God's nature is holy, and our nature is ſinful. * And that this is the truth,

* But, (1.) ſin is as contrary to holineſs, as holineſs is to ſin. And therefore, our ſinful nature is as contrary to God's holy nature, as God's holy nature is to our ſinful nature. And (2.) our contrariety to God is as univerſal as is our ſinfulneſs. If we are totally depraved, our contrariety to God is total. (3.) Contrariaty to the doctrines and duties of revealed religion, in which God's moral character is exhibited, is contrariety to God's moral character. Every objection againſt the doctrines, and all backwardneſs to the duties of religion, are ſo many expreſſions of contrariety to God's true and real character. (4.) If the true God and the true ſcheme of religion ſuited the human

truth, is evident from this, that originally God's nature and the nature of man were alike. As it is written, Gen. 1. 26. *And God ſaid, Let us make man in our image, after our likeneſs.* Ver. 27. *So God created man in his own image.* And therefore there was no contrariety between the holy nature of God and the nature of man, originally. When man began to exiſt, he viewed things as God did, and was affected accordingly. And as God loved his own character, exhibited in that law, which he gave to Adam; ſo Adam loved it too. There was then no principle of enmity againſt God in his heart; no diſpoſition to diſlike the ſtrictneſs of the law, or the ſeverity of the penalty, upon the moſt mature deliberation. Yea, he was perfectly pleaſed with both. For as God perfectly loved his own law; ſo Adam, being like God, created in his image, perfectly loved it too. So that there was originally no contrariety to God in Adam's nature. And therefore there is no contrariety, now, in man's nature to God,

human heart, mankind would as naturally be united in love to the one true God, and to the one true ſcheme of religion; as they are in love to the world. Had mankind liked the true God, they never would have ſet up a falſe god; and had they liked the true ſcheme of religion, they never would have invented a falſe one. (5.) Love to a falſe god, and to a falſe ſcheme of religion, is the exerciſe of a ſpirit of contrariety to the true God, and to the true religion. (6.) Love to God's moral character, properly expreſſed, was the only thing which expoſed the prophets, Jeſus Chriſt, and his apoſtles, to be hated, reviled and murdered. (7.) Chriſt on the croſs ſhews, that the enmity of the carnal mind againſt God, is mortal enmity. (8.) The Jews expreſſed and juſtified their enmity againſt Chriſt, both at once, by calling him by reproachful names. Joh. 8. 48. *Say we not well, that thou art a Samaritan and haſt a devil.* Mean time ſaying, Mat. 23. 30. *If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.* So while they hated and crucified him, who was foretold by all the prophets; they thought themſelves doing God good ſervice. (9.) They knew they hated Jeſus, and had they known him to be true God, their contrariety to the true God would have been aſcertained to their conſciences. (10.) Let God's true and real character be agreed upon, and we ſhall no longer differ about the character of man. (11.) God's true and real character would be agreed upon, if we did not hate to admit the truth. (12.) The contrariety of our ſinful nature to God's holy nature is the ſource of all the hereſies in the world.—Men love to have a God and a religion to ſuit their own hearts.

God, but only and merely, ſo far as man's nature is become ſinful. For as before ſin took place in the human heart, there was no contrariety to God in human nature; ſo now there is no one thing in human nature, that is contrary to God, but ſin; nor is there any root of bitterneſs, but wickedneſs.—But nothing, which is now, or which originally was eſſential to moral agency, is of the nature of ſin. For Adam was a moral agent, when he had no ſin; when he was in the image of God. Beſides, if ſomething eſſential to moral agency were ſinful, it would be a ſin to be a moral agent. There is therefore in the eſſential properties of a moral agent no contrariety to the divine nature. For there is nothing in the univerſe that is contrary to the holy nature of God, but ſin. And whatſoever is contrary to the holy nature of God, is ſin. To ſay, that there is ſomething in us, which is oppoſite to the holy nature of God, which is not ſin, but a duty; is to ſay, that oppoſition to God himſelf, is not ſin, but a duty. And if oppoſition to the holy nature of God, is not ſinful, there is no ſin. For if it is no ſin to be oppoſite to the holineſs of God, there can be no ſin. For if oppoſition to the holy nature of God is lawful, by fair conſtruction, God is legally dethroned, his law is vacated, we are become gods, too big to be under any government. For if it be lawful for us to oppoſe God, much more to oppoſe all other beings. So that, to ſay, that oppoſition to the holy nature of God is not ſinful, is, itſelf, perfect wickedneſs. Yet, according to Mr. M. that ſelf-love, which, in us, is oppoſite to the holineſs of the divine nature, and abſolutely inconſiſtent with the love of God, is not ſinful, but a duty. This is the moſt ſhocking ſentiment in his book. It is, in effect, to ſay, that it is our duty to be at enmity againſt God.-----Beſides,

Adam rebelled againſt his Creator, while God was his friend; prompted not by deſpair, but in a belief of ſatan's lies, *Ye ſhall be as Goas, ye ſhall not ſurely die*, he took and eat, contrary to the expreſs prohibition of his Maker. And we his poſterity, for near ſix thouſand years, have gone

gone on in rebellion, while God has offered to be our friend again. And his inſpired prophets have been abuſed, and his Son has been crucified, in this our world, while ſent to invite us to a reconciliation, and to offer us a pardon. Thus ſtands the fact, as recorded in the ſacred writings. And thus our contrariety to God began, when ſin began. Nor is there any thing in our nature contrary to the holy nature of God, but ſin. And we began to be ſinners, while God was our friend. And we have continued in our rebellion, thro' a long ſucceſſion of ages, while God has been offering pardon all the time.

Therefore,

1. The carnal mind is as really contrary to the holy nature of God, as the holy nature of God is to the carnal mind. For ſin is as contrary to holineſs, as holineſs is to ſin. And yet God is willing to forgive us thro' Chriſt; but we are not willing to be reconciled to him.

And therefore,

2. The enmity of the carnal mind againſt God is entirely of a criminal nature, and compriſes in it the ſum of all wickedneſs. For as a conformity to God's holy nature is the ſum of all holineſs; ſo a contrariety to God's holy nature is the ſum of all wickedneſs. To ſay, that a contrariety to the holy nature of God is not ſinful, is, in effect, to ſay, that there is no ſin on earth, or in hell. And indeed Mr. M. gives a broad hint, p. 50. that in hell there is no ſin in all their enmity againſt the Deity. And if his ſcheme is true, he muſt be right in this. But to uſe arguments to juſtify ourſelves, in our enmity againſt God, which will equally juſtify the devil, is to carry the point as far as the devil himſelf can deſire it ſhould be carried. Nor can any thing better pleaſe the devil, than to find himſelf juſtified, in his enmity againſt God and his Son, by the profeſſed friends of both.

3. If the enmity of the carnal mind againſt God is entirely criminal, and the ſum of all wickedneſs, then while we juſtify ourſelves in it, we are diſqualified for ſealing ordinances by it, if any ſin, as ſuch, can diſqualify

us. For to ſay, that a ſmall ſin, perſiſted in, diſqualifies for ſealing ordinances, and yet the greateſt ſin does not; to ſay, for inſtance, that ſtealing one ſhilling from our neighbour, conſidered merely as an injury done to him, without repentance, diſqualifies for ſealing ordinances, and that yet a ſtate and courſe of enmity againſt God, perſiſted in, does not, is to *ſtrain at a gnat, and to ſwallow a camel.*

4. But if it be really true, as Mr. M. ſays, that 'to 'love that character of God which is exhibited in the 'moral law, is the ſame thing as to love our own miſery:' And if 'this is the *true* reaſon, and the *only* reaſon' we do not love God; then our enmity againſt God is not in the leaſt degree criminal. And ſo it doth not in the leaſt degree diſqualify us for ſealing ordinances. Eſpecially, if we are heartily diſpoſed to love that character of God, which alone it is our duty to love; ſo that, without fail, we ſhall love it, as ſoon as we know it; and that *without any new principle of grace.*—Thus the enemies of God are taught, to think themſelves blameleſs in their enmity againſt God: And thus they are emboldened to approach the table of the Lord.—But what communion can there be, between him, who loved the character of God exhibited in the moral law, and became incarnate, and lived, and died to do it honor; and ſuch an *Antinomian* law-hating heart! Prov. 29. 27. 2 Cor. 6. 14, 15.

SECTION VII.

2 Cor. v. 20. *We pray you in Chriſt's ſtead, be ye reconciled to God.*

Queſtion. *Doth the goſpel call fallen man to be reconciled to that character of God, which fallen man, as ſuch, is at enmity againſt; or, only to be reconciled to another character of God, which fallen man, as ſuch, is not at enmity againſt, but is naturally diſpoſed to love as ſoon as known?*

OUR author undertakes to prove, (p. 40, 41, 42, 43.) that it is not the duty of fallen man 'to love that character of God which is exhibited in the moral law.' But

But that inſtead of its being a duty, it is a ſinful thing to do ſo; as it is 'inconſiſtent with the character of God, 'and the character of man; contrary to both law and 'goſpel; to nature and grace.' Becauſe 'to love this character is the ſame thing as to love our own miſery.' —And he alſo undertakes to prove, (p. 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48.) that fallen man, as ſuch, from the mere principles of nature, is diſpoſed to love that character of God which is exhibited in the goſpel, *which is the* ONLY *character the goſpel teaches us to love*; ſo that we ſhall love it, as ſoon as known, *without a new principle of grace.* And therefore the common doctrine of the neceſſity of a 'new principle of grace' is wrong, and 'regeneration is wrought by light.'

The queſtion relative to this ſcheme of religion, which we would now propoſe to examination is this, viz. *Doth the goſpel call fallen man to be reconciled to that character of God, which fallen man, as ſuch, is at enmity againſt; or only to be reconciled to another character of God, which fallen man, as ſuch, is not at enmity againſt, but is naturally diſpoſed to love as ſoon as known?*—We will in the firſt place, offer ſome arguments to prove, that the goſpel doth call fallen man to be reconciled to that character of God, which, as ſuch, he is at enmity againſt, and then conſider what Mr. M. has ſaid to the contrary.

Argument 1. The goſpel called Adam, immediately after his fall, to be reconciled to that very character of God againſt which he was at enmity, or it called him to no reconciliation at all. For to ſay, that the goſpel called him to be reconciled to a character againſt which he was not at enmity implies a contradiction. For it ſuppoſes a thing to be, and not to be, at the ſame time. For a call to a reconciliation ſuppoſes enmity. Therefore the goſpel did not call Adam after his fall to be reconciled to God at all, or elſe it called him to be reconciled to that character of God againſt which he was at enmity. But to ſay, that the goſpel did not call Adam to be reconciled to God at all, ſuppoſes that God was willing to be reconciled to Adam, but did not deſire

Adam

Adam to be reconciled to him. For if the goſpel which was preached to Adam by God himſelf did imply no call to Adam to be reconciled to God, then it is plain God did not deſire Adam to be reconciled to him; for he did not call him to it; he did not invite him to it: that is, he did not deſire, that Adam ſhould be reconciled to that character of himſelf which he had exhibited in his law. But if he did not deſire him to be reconciled to that character of himſelf which he had exhibited in his law, he was willing he ſhould continue to hate it. But if God was willing, that Adam ſhould continue to hate that character of himſelf which he had exhibited in his law, then he did really hate it himſelf. For if God loved it, he would deſire Adam to love it; for he would deſire Adam to be like him, and after his image. But to ſay, that God hated that character of himſelf which he had exhibited in his law, ſuppoſes an eſſential change in God's moral character. For God loved that character before Adam fell, as will be granted.

Remark 1. In this Mr. M's ſcheme is conſiſtent with itſelf, viz. In ſuppoſing no change of nature neceſſary to be in us in order to our reconciliation to God; becauſe the change of nature neceſſary to a reconciliation between God and us, has already taken place on God's ſide. His nature is changed, and ſo there is no need that ours ſhould be changed. We only need to know the change which has taken place in God's nature, in God's moral character, and all will be well. The breach will be made up, friendſhip will commence, *without any new principle of grace in us.*

Rem. 2. In this alſo the ſcripture ſcheme is conſiſtent with itſelf, viz. In ſuppoſing a change of nature neceſſary to take place on our part, in order to our liking the divine character. Becauſe, according to ſcripture, no change of nature has, or ever will take place on God's ſide. For it is a ſcripture maxim, that contrary natures are an abomination to each other. Pro. 29. 27. *An unjuſt man is abomination to the juſt; and he that is upright in*

in the way is abomination to the wicked. Therefore contrary natures cannot *like* and *take pleaſure* in each other. 2 Cor. 6. 14, 15. *For what fellowſhip hath righteouſneſs with unrighteouſneſs? And what communion hath light with darkneſs? And what concord hath Chriſt with Belial?* But our ſinful nature is contrary to God's holy nature. Rom. 8. 7. *The carnal mind is enmity againſt God.* And therefore regeneration is neceſſary. Joh. 3. 3. *Except a man be born again he cannot ſee the kingdom of God.* And a new nature is communicated in regeneration. Joh. 3. 6. *That which is born of the Spirit is ſpirit.* The old nature is taken away, and a new nature is given. Ezek. 36. 26. *A new heart alſo will I give you, and a new ſpirit will I put within you, and I will take away the ſtony heart out of your fleſh, and I will give you an heart of fleſh.* And this new nature lays a foundation for delight in God and in his ways. Ver. 27. *I will put my ſpirit within you, and cauſe you to walk in my ſtatutes.* Pſal. 73. 25. *Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth that I deſire beſides thee.*

Rem. 3. There are two kinds of delight in God, which may take place in the human heart, viz. (1.) Delight in a miſtaken idea of God. (2.) Delight in God's true and real character. True delight, is delight in God's true and real character. And falſe delight, is delight in a falſe and miſtaken idea of God. Deiſts and Socinians believe, that God deſigns to make all his creatures finally happy: this is their idea of God. And they delight in this idea. The impenitent, law-hating *Antinomian*, believes, that God deſigns to make him finally happy: this is his idea of God; and he delights in this idea. The Chriſtian believes, that God has a ſupreme regard to the Deity, and deſigns to aſſert the dignity of the divine nature, and the infinite evil of ſin, in the juſt puniſhment of every tranſgreſſion, without exception, in the criminal, or in his ſurety. And ſo to maintain the honor of his law, which is the image of his heart, a tranſcript of his moral perfections; and to pardon none but penitent believers; and to grant pardon only as an act of mere, pure grace, and only thro' the

the atonement of Chriſt, who hath born the curſe of the law, died the juſt for the unjuſt. This is his idea of God. And he delights in this idea. It gives him pleaſure to ſee God exalted, the law honored, ſin puniſhed, the ſinner humbled, grace glorified. This is a glorious way of ſaving ſinners. Chriſt crucified, in this view, is, in his eyes, *the wiſdom of God.* It appears to be wiſdom, *truly divine*, to be at ſuch infinite expence, to do honor to that character of God, which is exhibited in the law. For that character appears to be truly divine, and ſo to be worthy of this infinite honor. *It is wiſe to pay infinite honor to that which is infinitely glorious. But it is fooliſh to render honor to that which is odious, and diſhonorable.* To a regenerate heart Chriſt crucified is, therefore, *the wiſdom of God*, but to others *fooliſhneſs* and *a ſtumbling block.* 1 Cor. 1. 18, 23, 24. and 2. 14.—Theſe ſentiments are explained and proved at large, in my *Eſſay on the nature and glory of the goſpel.* And this is what Mr. M. miſrepreſents and cries out againſt, *as new divinity.* p. 40, 41, 42.

Rem. 4. Every unregenerate ſinner, be his doctrinal knowledge what it will, is, in the temper of his heart, an infidel. For it is incredible, that infinite honor ſhould be done to that which appears worthy of no honor at all. But the divine law, and the divine character therein exhibited, to a carnal heart, appear worthy of no honor at all. For they appear not amiable, but odious. For Rom. 8. 7. *The carnal mind is enmity againſt God.* Therefore, a cordial belief of the truth of the goſpel is peculiar to the regenerate. 1 Joh. 5. 1. *Whoſoever believeth that Jeſus is the Chriſt is born of God.* Therefore,

Rem. 5. It is not ſtrange, that an unregenerate man, when the true goſpel of Chriſt is explained and ſet in a clear light before his eyes, ſhould cry out, 'This is *new divinity* to me.' For it may truly be quite *new* to him: A ſyſtem of ſentiments he never believed to be true. But it is ſtrange, that the true goſpel of Chriſt ſhould appear to be *new divinity* to an old ſaint.——But it is time to proceed.

Arg. 2.

Arg. 2. God the Father loves that character of himſelf, which he exhibited to Adam in his law: But the goſpel calls us to be like God; to be conformed to his image: Therefore the goſpel calls us to love that character of God which is exhibited in his law.—That God the Father loves that character of himſelf, which he exhibited to Adam in his law is evident from this, viz. That character which is exhibited in the law was God's true character; as Mr. M. grants, p. 41. "The divine 'character exhibited in the moral law, was that which 'was exhibited to Adam in his ſtate of innocency, and—'it was God's true character.' Indeed, it was God's true and real character, or elſe God gave himſelf a character contrary to truth in the moral law: which none will dare to ſay. But if that character of God, was God's true and real character, then it will follow, that God loved that character then. For all will grant, that God loved his own character. But if God loved that character then, he does love it ſtill, unleſs his nature is changed. But that God is immutable, *the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and forever*, needs no proof to thoſe who believe the bible. But if God ſtill loves that character of himſelf, which he exhibited in his law, ſince the fall, as much as he did before, then in order to our being like God and in his image, we muſt love it too. For if he loves it, and we hate it, then we are not like him, but are contrary to him: are not of the ſame ſpirit, but of a ſpirit and diſpoſition contrary to him. But the goſpel calls us to be like God; and in a true and real converſion we are changed into the *ſame image*; as all grant. And therefore the goſpel calls us to be reconciled to that character of God which is exhibited in the moral law, which he always did, and always will love, and without the love of which we are not like God, but contrary unto him; are not in his image, but are in the image of the wicked one, who doth now, and always will hate that character of God, which is exhibited in his law.

Arg. 3. God the Son, in character of mediator, loves that

that character of God, which is exhibited in the law, and againſt which the carnal mind is at enmity: But the goſpel calls us to be like Chriſt in the temper of our hearts: therefore the goſpel calls us to be reconciled to, and to love that character of God which is exhibited in his law, againſt which all unregenerate ſinners are at enmity.---That God the Son, in character of mediator, loves that character of God which is exhibited in the law, is evident, becauſe he is *the expreſs image of his Father's Perſon.* Heb. 1. 3. But his Father loves that character, as has been proved; and therefore he loves it as much as his Father does.——And beſides, he became incarnate, lived and died to do honour to the divine law, and to the divine character therein exhibited. But the goſpel calls us to be like Chriſt, to be of the ſame ſpirit, to imitate him, and follow his example: But if we hate that character of God which is exhibited in the law, we are not like Chriſt, we are not of the ſame ſpirit, we do not imitate him, nor follow his example; but we are of a temper contrary to him, and like the devil.

Remark 1. To hate that character of God which is exhibited in the law, is to hate Chriſt Jeſus and his righteouſneſs. For Chriſt Jeſus loved that character, and lived and died to do it honor: and in this his righteouſneſs conſiſted; and for this his Father *was well pleaſed in him.* Therefore,

Rem. 2. Thoſe who are at enmity againſt God the Father, are alſo at enmity againſt God the Son. For to hate the law, is to hate the goſpel. Becauſe the goſpel vindicates the honor of the law. Thus the Phariſees, who hated the true character of God the Father, which was exhibited in the law of Moſes, likewiſe hated the character of Jeſus Chriſt, exhibited in explaining and vindicating that law in his public miniſtry, and in detecting and condemning the falſe gloſſes which they had put upon it. *They have both ſeen and hated both me and my Father.* For if God's character exhibited in his law is odious, then the character of Chriſt, as mediator, is odious alſo.

alſo. Becauſe Chriſt's mediatorial character conſiſts in ſupreme love to that character of God which is exhibited in the law, exerciſed and expreſſed in his life, and in his death.

Rem. 3. To expect acceptance with God on the account of the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, which conſiſts in love to that character of God which is exhibited in the law, while we allow ourſelves to hate that character, and really believe that the goſpel does not call us to love it, implies this groſs inconſiſtence, viz. That we acknowledge, that love to that character is above all things acceptable to God, and that yet God does not deſire us to love it. It was his will that Chriſt ſhould love and honor it to procure the ſalvation of his diſciples, but his diſciples may lawfully hate it. Moreover, to depend on Chriſt's righteouſneſs, i. e. on Chriſt's loving that character and doing it honor, while we allow ourſelves to hate it, and affirm, that 'it is contrary to the character of God and 'to the character of man; contrary to the law and to 'the goſpel; contrary to nature and to grace,' for us to love it; is groſsly inconſiſtent. For it is to depend on that as our juſtifying righteouſneſs in the ſight of God, which, if it were in us, would be a ſin. For *ſin is a tranſgreſſion of the law.* But Mr. M. ſays, that it is 'contrary to the law of God for us to love that character of God which is exhibited in the moral law. p. 41, 42. Thus men are taught to truſt in the righteouſneſs of Chriſt for juſtification in the ſight of God, while they allow themſelves to hate that righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and to believe it would be a ſinful thing in them, to love what he loved, and to be holy as he was holy, and righteous as he was righteous.—But, if we think it lawful to hate that character of God which is exhibited in the divine law; then we think ourſelves innocent in hating of it. And ſo our real dependence for acceptance with God in this caſe, is not on Chriſt's righteouſneſs, but on our own innocence.

By the law given to Adam it appears (1) That God

was diſpoſed to puniſh ſin. (2) That, in his view, it became him, as moral governor of the world, to puniſh ſin. (3) That it was his fixed determination that ſin ſhould not go unpuniſhed. And by the croſs of Chriſt, it appears in a ſtill clearer light, (1) That God is diſpoſed to puniſh ſin. (2) That, in his view, it becomes him, as moral governor of the world, to puniſh ſin. (3) That it is his fixed determination that ſin ſhall not go unpuniſhed.—But a determination, in all inſtances, to puniſh ſin in the criminal, and never to accept a ſurety to die in his room, is not, and never was any part of God's revealed character.—However, if God's diſpoſition to puniſh ſin is not an amiable diſpoſition, it never was and never will be an object of love, whether exhibited in the law, or in the croſs of Chriſt.—But if it is a beauty in the divine character, it always was, and always will be, an object of love, whether exhibited in the law, or in the croſs of Chriſt.—To ſay, that the holineſs and juſtice of the divine nature are glorious, when the ſurety is the ſufferer; but odious, when the criminal himſelf is puniſhed, is the groſſeſt abſurdity, and the moſt barefaced hypocriſy.

Arg. 4. The regenerating, ſanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit, are neceſſary in order to that reconciliation to God, to which the goſpel calls us, as is evident from Joh. 3. 3—6. But the regenerating, ſanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit are not neceſſary in order to our loving a character, which while unregenerate, we are not at enmity againſt. For, (1) There is no need of the regenerating influences of the Spirit, in order to all that *preparatory work*, which is before regeneration; as all grant. (2) After this *preparatory work* is completely finiſhed, according to Mr. M. 'The unregenerate ſinner 'is capable of receiving the light of the knowledge of 'the glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt:' while unregenerate, he means, for he adds 'by which his ſoul will be regenerated.' p. 51. Thus the glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt is actually ſeen, according to Mr. M.

M. by the unregenerate ſinner, while unregenerate. And therefore there is, according to him, no need of the regenerating, ſanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit to bring the ſinner thus far. Nay, in fact, the ſinner comes thus far, while unregenerate. And, (4) being brought thus far, the ſinner now needs *no new principle of grace*, as he ſays, p. 47, 48. For indeed it is natural for all mankind, to love that which appears glorious and amiable in their eyes. Nor is any aſſiſtance needed in this, according to Mr. M. no, not ſo much as external means, 'it will have this effect without the neceſſity of an exhortation.' p. 52. Juſt as it was natural for Jacob to love Rachel, as ſoon as he ſaw her, 'without the need of an exhortation.' And, much leſs did he need any ſupernatural aſſiſtance of the Spirit of God in the affair. Yea, according to Mr. M. the reconciliation will be perfect, on the firſt diſcovery, ſo that an exhortation to be reconciled to God will never more be needed. Thus it is evident, that, on Mr. M's ſcheme, the regenerating, ſanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit, are entirely needleſs in order to a ſinner's loving that character of God, againſt which, Adam was no more at enmity, after his fall, than he was before he fell, which Mr. M. ſuppoſes is exhibited in the goſpel. And therefore (5) regeneration, in his ſenſe of it, may 'be wrought by light,' without any ſanctifying influences of the Spirit at all. For as God's ſuppoſed new character may appear glorious and amiable to one, who is at enmity againſt God's old character; ſo this new character may for the ſame reaſon be loved, by one, who is at enmity againſt his old character. That is, by the *carnal mind*. For this NEW GOD teaches his votaries, that it is 'contrary to the character of God, and 'contrary to the character of men; contrary to the law 'and to the goſpel; contrary to nature and to grace,' to love that character of God, which is exhibited in the divine law, *holy, juſt and good* as it is, againſt which the carnal mind is at enmity. And this doctrine is ſo perfectly agreeable to a carnal heart, that if we may have the fa-

vour and love of the Almighty on this plan, Mr. M. might well ſay, p. 43. 'That there is nothing in our 'fallen circumſtances to prevent our returning to the 'love of God,' and that *without any new principle of grace.*

Arg. 5. All the holy inhabitants of heaven love that character of God, which is exhibited in his holy law, as it is ſet forth in the cleareſt and ſtrongeſt point of light, in the eternal miſery of the damned. For they all join to cry *Hallelujah*, while *their ſmoke aſcendeth for ever and ever.* Rev. 19. 1—6. But if we are not by the goſpel brought to a reconciliation to the ſame character, we cannot join in the worſhip of heaven, nor with any comfort live among them. 2 Cor. 6. 14, 15.—But if Mr. M's ſcheme is true,

Arg. 6. The breach between God and the ſinner may be made up, and a perfect reconciliation take place, without the ſinner's ever repenting of that enmity againſt God, which is in his heart, as a fallen creature. Yea, it is lawful for the ſinner to continue in that enmity. Yea, it is his duty. For Mr. M. ſays, that it is 'contrary to the law of God' to love that character of the Deity, which is exhibited in the moral law. p. 40. 41, 42. And therefore when Chriſt came to *call ſinners to repentance*, he had no intention, that they ſhould repent of their enmity againſt his Father's character, exhibited in that holy law, which he loved and obeyed in his life, and honoured in his death; but was free and heartily willing they ſhould go on in their enmity to it, to all eternity. For Mr. M. ſays, p. 43. 'The love of 'God which the goſpel teacheth,' is not love to the divine character exhibited in the law, but 'love of that 'divine character which is exhibited to us in a Media-'tor, and NO OTHER.' But if God the Father loves that character of himſelf which is exhibited in his holy law, and if God the Son loves that character, and if all the holy inhabitants of heaven are like God and his Son, and love that character too, then converts on Mr. M's ſcheme,

when

when they arrive to heaven, if they ever ſhould arrive there, could not join with the church above, or make that profeſſion of love to God, which all the reſt of the inhabitants do there; but would need an external graceleſs covenant in that world, in order to join in full communion there, as much as they do in this world here below, in order to join in full communion here.

But it is time now to attend to Mr. M's reaſoning, and this is the ſum, and this is the whole force of his argument, on the ſtrength of which his whole ſcheme ſtands, and which he has repeated over and over again.

Objection. *To love that character of God which is exhibited in his law, is the ſame thing as to love our own miſery. But to love our own miſery is to take pleaſure in pain; which is a contradiction, and in its own nature impoſſible. Contrary to the character of God, and to the character of men; contrary to the law and to the goſpel; contrary to nature and to grace.* p. 10, 12. 41, 42, 43.

Anſwer 1. Our author ſays, p. 11. 'That the primary reaſon why God is to be loved, is the tranſcendent excellency of the divine perfections.' *

But 'the tranſcendent excellency of the Divine Perfections' is the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and forever.—And therefore that character of God, which is exhibited in the law, is as 'tranſcendently excellent' ſince, as it was before the fall. And therefore *this reaſon of love* remains in FULL FORCE to us in our guilty ſtate.

Anſ. 2.

* If 'all the ground and reaſon there is for fallen man, to exerciſe dependence on God,' i. e. for eternal life, 'ariſeth from the covenant of grace; as Mr. M. ſays, p. 12. Yet all the ground and reaſon that mankind have to love God, does not ariſe 'from the covenant of grace.' For God was in himſelf infinitely worthy of our love, antecedent to a conſideration of the gift of Chriſt, otherwiſe the gift of Chriſt to anſwer the demands of the law, in our room, had been needleſs; for there was no need our ſurety ſhould ever pay a debt for us, which we ourſelves never owed.—And it was as 'repugnant to the law, and as much 'preſumption' to expect eternal life before the fall, as ſince, without perfect obedience, on the foot of law. This kind of *dependence* was never required, by the law, of Adam, or of any other man. It was no more his duty before the fall, than it was afterwards;

Anſ. 2. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghoſt, and all the holy inhabitants of heaven, love that character of God, which is exhibited in his law; and yet they do not love miſery it ſelf, or take any pleaſure in the pains of the damned, conſidered merely as pain.—If God did take pleaſure in the pains of the damned, conſidered merely as pain; if this were the character which he exhibits of himſelf in his law; then to love this character would be the ſame thing as to love miſery. So that this is implicitly, and by fair conſtruction, imputed to the Father of the univerſe, when it is ſaid, that 'to love that character of God which is exhibited in the divine law, is the ſame thing as to love our own miſery.' —But to ſay, that God and the holy inhabitants of heaven take pleaſure in the pains of the damned, conſidered merely as pain, is to impute to them a ſpirit of *diſintereſted malice*. But to juſtify our enmity againſt God by ſuch an imputation is exceeding impious.——But on the other hand, if God may love that character of himſelf, which is exhibited in his law, and yet not love miſery it ſelf; then were we *regenerate*, were we made *partakers of the divine nature*, we might be like God; and be affected as the holy inhabitants of heaven are; and ſo might love that character of God which is exhibited in the divine law, and not love miſery in ourſelves, or in any other beings.

A wiſe and good father, when he inflicts juſt puniſhment on a haughty, ſtubborn child for ſome heinous crime, approves and loves his own conduct, and the character which he exhibits therein; but yet he does not love his child's miſery, itſelf, or take pleaſure in his pain, as ſuch, or deſire his child to take pleaſure in it. And if the proud, haughty, ſtubborn, impenitent child ſhould ſay, 'To love a whipping father is the ſame thing as to 'love to be whipped. But to love to be whipped is to 'love miſery. But to love miſery is a contradiction, and 'in its own nature impoſſible, and contrary to the law 'of God, which requires me to love myſelf;' every obedient

obedient child in the family would be able to ſee the fallacy of the argument. And love to their father's honor would make them love him for vindicating his honor in the juſt puniſhment of ſuch a ſon. Nor is there a father on earth, hearing ſuch language as this from a child, but that would think it proper and fit, that his uncircumciſed heart ſhould be ſo humbled, as to accept the puniſhment of his iniquity, before he pardoned him. Nor would he forgive him, until he ſhould feel and ſay, 'I deſerve to be whipped. It is good enough for me. 'It becomes my father to do it. Nor is it a blemiſh, 'but a beauty in his character, to be diſpoſed to chaſ-'tize ſuch a haughty wretch as I am.'—For the father approves of his own diſpoſition to puniſh his child. He knows that it becomes him. And until his child knows it too, he cannot but diſapprove of him, as a ſtubborn, impenitent child. And yet no father ever deſired his child to love miſery. Nay, on the contrary, did the child love to be whipped, did whipping give the child pleaſure, it would ceaſe to be of the nature of a puniſhment. It would gratify the child, and fruſtrate the father.—To ſay, in this caſe, that 'to love a whipping father is the ſame thing as to love to be whipped,' is to ſay, that the father whips the child, merely for the pleaſure of whipping of it, and takes delight in its miſery, for itſelf: and ſo is guilty of *diſintereſted malice*, which no man ever was guilty of, and which to charge on the Deity is the higheſt blaſphemy. For if the father loves his own character, and delights in his own conduct toward his child, without loving the child's miſery, itſelf; then nothing hinders, but that the child might love his father's character and conduct too, without loving its own miſery. For a more particular anſwer to this objection, ſee *Eſſay on the nature and glory of the goſpel*, p. 32, 33, 34, 35, 36.

SECT.

SECTION VIII.

Gen. i. 27. *So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him.*

Queſtion. *How was it poſſible for Adam, before the fall, to love that character of God which was exhibited to him in the law, conſiſtently with the love of his own happineſs?*

The difficulty which attends this queſtion may come into view, if we conſider,

1. THAT a ſtate of eternal miſery is infinitely worſe than not to be. Exiſtence itſelf is deſirable, to mere nature, only as it implies a capacity for the enjoyment of happineſs. Nature dreads annihilation, as thereby all happineſs is loſt for ever. But it is better to be without happineſs, than it is to be, not only, without happineſs, but miſerable. Pure miſery is worſe than non-exiſtence. Hence abandoned, guilty ſinners often wiſh for annihilation. And had Adam, for the firſt tranſgreſſion, been threatened with annihilation, it might have been thought of with leſs horror and dread. But miſery is a dreadful thing. And eternal miſery is infinitely dreadful, infinitely worſe than not to be. How therefore could Adam think of that dreadful word DEATH, as implying eternal miſery, and yet love that Being, who had threatened this, for the firſt tranſgreſſion? Yea, and *love that very character exhibited in the threatening itſelf?* How could *love to this character conſiſt with his love to his own happineſs?*—It is true, God had been kind to him, in giving him a happy exiſtence, ſurrounded with many delights: But this happineſs and theſe delights, to be enjoyed for thouſands of ages, were lighter than a feather compared with eternal miſery.—And it is true, he might remain happy for ever, in caſe of perfect obedience. And this was a glorious proſpect.—But what if he ſinned? What then? DEATH! ETERNAL DEATH! never ending woes were threatened, as his juſt deſert.—But why eternal death for one offence? Where was the wiſdom, juſtice, or goodneſs of this? This is the language of ſelf-love,

love, as it now takes place in fallen man. And if, as Mr. M. ſays, 'this principle of ſelf-love was eſſential to moral agency' in innocent Adam, it muſt have been the language of his heart before the fall.——But,

2. One bad property entirely approved of, and conſtantly exerciſed, will render any moral character devoid of beauty. If there is no moral beauty in the divine character, he is neither worthy of ſupreme love, or capable of being the ſupreme good. A law, a fixed law, is an expreſſion of the fixed character of the law-giver. If God's diſpoſition to puniſh ſin with eternal miſery, appeared in Adam's eyes to be a bad property in the Deity, it was not poſſible he ſhould love him with all his heart. It was as impoſſible before his fall as after, even, as it is as impoſſible to love a tyrant before we fall into his hands, as afterwards. And if Adam could not love the divine character before his fall, then he could take no delight in him. For an odious character, inſtead of giving pleaſure, gives pain. And if Adam neither loved the divine character, nor delighted in it, before the fall, he was in the ſame ſtate and temper of mind, before, as he was after the fall. And if ſo, then he was not created in the image of God, but came into exiſtence as much depraved as we are.

3. To ſay, that this dark ſide of the divine character was out of his view before he fell, and that he viewed the Deity only in the character of an almighty benefactor, and his friend; and therefore in this view of things, 'the love of God and ſelf-love were conſiſtent:' is really to ſay, that Adam before the fall did not love God's true and real character, as exhibited in the law which he was under. But rather, that character was ſo entirely out of his view, that he had no exerciſes of heart about it, good, or bad; for it, or againſt it: which amounts to the ſame thing, as to ſay, that he was never actually friendly to God's true character, even before the fall. But rather had he fully known it, and taken a deliberate view of it, with application to himſelf, he would have diſliked it, even then. And this muſt, with as much reaſon,

then, as afterwards, have been the language of his heart; 'To love this character of God is to love my own misery; but to love my own misery is impossible. For to take pleasure in pain implies a contradiction.'

4. Mr. M. says, p. 42. 'For a principle of self-love is essential to our nature. Take away all self-love, and a total indifference to pleasure and pain will take place in us; and then, we become incapable of being influenced by promises and threatenings, rewards and punishments; which strips us of our moral agency. But to love God in our guilty state, according to the character of him in the moral law, does thus totally exclude all self-love from its proper place and exercise in the heart. For to be well pleased in God as a holy and righteous Being, from the perfections of whose nature, it becomes *absolutely necessary*, that he should make us for ever, compleatly miserable, * is directly repugnant to, and absolutely inconsistent with the least degree of regard to our own well-being. There can be

* Q. 1. Was it *absolutely necessary from the perfections of the divine nature*, that fallen Adam should be miserable for ever? i. e. that his sin should be punished in his own person?—Or, Q. 2. Did God *by the law given to Adam* lay himself under an *absolute necessity* to make Adam miserable for ever? i. e. to punish his sin in his own person.—If so, then the *doctrine of substitution*, of one dying in the room of another, is *absolutely inconsistent* with the perfections of the divine nature, and with the tenor of the divine law.—Which to say, saps the very foundation of divine revelation; and demonstrates that the God, who appeared to Adam after the fall, was not the same God that had appeared to him before.—The God of the law, and the God of the gospel are two Beings, *absolutely inconsistent* with each other.—The truth is—1. That God's disposition to punish sin according to its desert, is, and ever was, and ever will be essential to his nature: But to punish sin, in all instances, in the criminal himself, without ever admitting a surety, is not essential to his nature.——But—2. God's disposition to punish sin according to its desert is set in as clear and strong a point of light in the gospel, as in the law; in the death of Christ as if every sinner had been punished in his own person.—3. This disposition is a beauty in the divine character, or a blemish.—If it is a beauty, then it is, and always was, and always will be an object of love.—If a blemish, then it is not an object of love, as exhibited in the law, or in the gospel; in the death of the criminal, or of his surety.—But if it is a blemish, it is more odious, as exhibited in the gospel,

'be in nature no ſuch ſort of regeneration as to bring 'the heart under ſuch circumſtances, to exerciſe true 'love to God.'——Therefore, if theſe things are true,

5. It was, in the nature of things impoſſible, that Adam before the fall, ſhould deliberately and underſtandingly love that character of God which was exhibited to him in the law he was under. For it implied 'love to his own miſery' to love it one time as really as another, before his fall as well as afterwards. Thus when a wiſe and good father threatens to whip his child in caſe he commits ſome particular crime, which he warns him againſt; to love the character of that father exhibited in that threatning is as really contrary to ſelf-love before the crime is committed as it is afterwards. For it is preciſely the ſame thing to love a character exhibited in a threatning, as it is to love the ſame character exhibited in the execution of that threatning. For the character exhibited is preciſely the ſame. But to love the ſame character is the ſame thing. And if it implies a 'total indifference to pleaſure and pain' to love this character, at one time, it does alſo equally at all times. For love to it, is always, at all times, and under all circumſtances, preciſely one and the ſame thing. So that, if Mr. M's reaſoning is juſt, Adam came into exiſtence with a ſpirit of enmity to God in his heart. Nor was it poſſible in the nature of things, that he ſhould ever have had it in his

goſpel, than in the law.—4. As a regard to a parent's honor renders the parent's diſpoſition to maintain his honour, in the government of his houſe, a beauty in the eyes of a child; ſo a regard to the honor of the Deity renders his diſpoſition, to maintain his honor, in the government of his kingdom, a beauty in the eyes of every regenerate ſoul. But the holineſs and juſtice of the divine nature are diſagreable in the eyes of every one, who is under the government of ſupreme ſelf-love. For mere ſelf-love has no regard for God.—However, 5. A carnal heart, which is enmity againſt God's true and real character, from a mere ſelfiſh ſpirit may be greatly pleaſed with the idea of *an almighty reconciled father and friend, determined to make him happy for ever*, and may cry out, *This God is tranſcendently excellent and glorious*; But God does not ſuſtain this character, with reſpect to any impenitent ſinner. It is true, many impenitent ſinners have ſuch 'a diſcovery,' but the thing diſcovered is a lie, and the father of lies is the author of the diſcovery. And yet they miſtake this lie, for *glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt*.

his heart, to love that character of God which was exhibited in the law which he was under. Nor is it possible, that we his posterity should ever be brought to love it. 'There can be in nature no such sort of regeneration.' Therefore Adam was not created in the image of God, nor are any of his posterity recovered to the image of God by the regenerating, sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit. And thus divine revelation is sapped at the very foundation. For one of the first facts revealed, is, in its own nature absolutely impossible, viz. That Adam was created in the image of God. Because, for Adam to love that character of God, which was exhibited in that law, which Adam was under, was 'inconsistent with the least degree of regard to his own well-being.'——Besides,

6. If it is inconsistent with that regard to our own well-being, which we ought to exercise, in our guilty state, to love that character of God; it is equally inconsistent with that regard to our neighbour's well-being, which we ought to exercise. For it is an agreed point, that we ought *to love our neighbour as ourselves.* And it is as 'contrary to the law of God' to delight in our neighbour's misery as in our own. So that,

7. Unless a universal salvation of devils and damned takes place, it will eternally be 'absolutely inconsistent' with that regard which we ought to have to our selves and to our neighbours to love the Deity. And therefore, if Mr. M's reasoning is just, all holy beings in the intellectual system must join in a general revolt, unless the Deity entirely lays aside his moral character, exhibited in the moral law; and grants a general release to all the damned.—And thus,

8. The doctrine of the eternity of hell torments must be given up, or God's moral character is wholly ruined. For it is as bad a piece of conduct in the Deity to damn my neighbour, as it is to damn myself. For my neighbour's welfare is worth as much as my own. And it is as 'contrary to the law' to love my neighbour's misery, as to love my own misery. It never was, therefore, if

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Mr. M's reaſoning is juſt, any part of God's moral character, to be diſpoſed to puniſh ſin with *everlaſting puniſhment*, as Jeſus taught, Mat. 25. 46. And ſo Jeſus was not the Chriſt.——Or, elſe the *Socinians* are right, and we muſt join with them, and ſay, that God never did think; (1) That he was God, i. e. an infinitely glorious and amiable being, infinitely worthy of the ſupreme love and univerſal obedience of his rational creatures. Or, (2) That ſin was an infinite evil. Or (3) that ſin did deſerve an infinite puniſhment. Nor (4) did he ever intend to puniſh it with *everlaſting puniſhment*. And (5) if ſin is not an infinite evil, an infinite atonement never was needed, or made. And ſo (6) our Saviour is not God.—And thus a denial of *the divinity of God the Father*, iſſues in the denial of *the divinity of God the Son*. And having framed in our fancy a God to ſuit our hearts, the *Holy Ghoſt*, as a ſanctifier, becomes needleſs. For we can love this God, *without any new principle of grace*.—And thus, if Mr. M's reaſoning is juſt, and if we will purſue it, in its neceſſary conſequences, we are *Socinians*, or *infidels*: and the odds between *Socinianiſm* and *infidelity* is not great.

Thus the difficulty is ſtated. And the anſwer to it is as follows.

This muſt be admitted, as a ſelf-evident maxim, that that regard to the welfare of our ſelves and of our neighbours, which is inconſiſtent with the love of God's moral character, is of the nature of oppoſition to God. But oppoſition to the moral character of God is not a duty, but a ſin. That ſelf-love, therefore, 'which is abſolutely inconſiſtent with the love of God' is criminal. And therefore it was ſo far from being 'eſſential to moral agency' in innocent Adam, that it did not belong to, but was inconſiſtent with his character. He loved happineſs, but he placed his chief happineſs in God's glory: *of whom, and by whom, and to whom are all things, to whom be glory for ever*. Nor had he any ſeparate intereſt of his own, independent of God, and in oppoſition to his honor and glory, nor the leaſt degree of a ſelfiſh ſpirit. For himſelf

himſelf, his ſoul and body, his all, was offered up as a living ſacrifice to God, without reſerve. And it was no more inconſiſtent with Adam's love of happineſs to love God for ſaying, *In the day thou eateſt thereof thou ſhalt ſurely die*; than it was inconſiſtent with God's goodneſs for God to love his own character exhibited in this threatening. It is in its own nature, and by the conſent of all mankind, perfectly conſiſtent, to give up and ſacrifice a leſſer good to a greater, if the greater can be ſecured in no other way: while yet, at the ſame time, the leſſer good, which is given up, is valued according to its worth. If God acted a conſiſtent part in exerciſing a greater regard to his own honor, than to Adam's welfare, in giving out that threatening, *In the day thou eateſt thereof thou ſhalt ſurely die*, then it was equally conſiſtent in Adam to be affected as his Maker was. If the Deity was conſiſtent with himſelf, then Adam, who was created in his image, was conſiſtent alſo. If the holineſs and juſtice of the divine nature, exhibited in that threatening, were perfect in beauty, without a blemiſh, in the eyes of infinite goodneſs, they muſt likewiſe appear ſo in Adam's eyes, while he had no other kind of regard for his own welfare, than had his Creator. That is, ſo long as he continued to be in the image of God. And if love to God and to his own happineſs were originally conſiſtent in Adam, when in the image of God, they may be equally conſiſtent in any of Adam's ſons, who are anew reſtored to that image of God which Adam loſt. And the holineſs and juſtice of the divine nature, as exhibited in the divine law, may appear to be perfect in beauty, with application to ourſelves; and God appear to be infinitely lovely, in his diſpoſition to puniſh ſin according to its deſerts; and yet our own eternal welfare be at the ſame time prized according to its worth, and the ſalvation of the goſpel appear infinitely precious, and the fruit of grace infinitely great and abſolutely free; and the goſpel way of ſalvation worthy of God. But were not the divine character exhibited in the divine law perfect in beauty, without a blemiſh, it ought to have been

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laid aſide in diſgrace, and not honored with the higheſt honors on the croſs. If 'to love God is the ſame thing as to love miſery,' if to love God is 'contrary to the law of God,' then that law which requires this, is an abſurd, inconſiſtent, tyrannical law, not worthy of God, nor worthy to be honored by the blood of his own Son.—For a more large and particular view of this ſubject the reader is referred to my *Eſſay on the goſpel.* ſect. vi.

Mr. M's reaſoning implies, that, in Adam before the fall, there was really 'no principle of holineſs,' no diſintereſted regard to the Deity: and that his whole ſoul was under the government of ſelf-love, even the ſame 'principle of ſelf-love' which governed him after the fall. And therefore as ſoon as God's favour was loſt, and he expoſed to deſtruction, this favorite principle of ſelf-love became 'inconſiſtent with the love of God,' and continues to be ſo, until God appears to be our friend again. And ſo Adam had no 'principle of holineſs' to looſe, nor is there any ſuch thing for us to expect.

Mr. M. ſays, p. 48. 'But when we inquire of them, 'what they mean by this *new principle* which is implant-'ed in the ſoul by regeneration, they can give no account 'about it"—Yes, we can give as diſtinct an account about it, as we can of a 'principle of ſelf-love.' It is that *image of God in which Adam was created, reſtored anew.* It is true, that in Adam this *holy principle* was not a confirmed habit, but liable to be loſt by the firſt ſin; but in believers, who are united to the ſecond Adam, the 'principle of grace' is a confirmed habit and ſhall never be loſt. It becomes confirmed in conſequence of the firſt act of ſaving faith. Eph. 1. 13, 14. * But its nature is the

* As Adam was created in the image of God to prepare him for holy acts and exerciſes of heart; ſo the ſame image of God is reſtored in regeneration to prepare us for the firſt holy act. As there was a holy principle in Adam before the firſt holy act; ſo there is a holy principle in the regenerate ſinner before the firſt holy act.—And, as Adam's holy principle was not a confirmed habit in its firſt exiſtence, but was to have been confirmed on his acting up to the covenant he was under; ſo the holy principle given in regeneration is not a confirmed habit in its firſt exiſtence, but immediately becomes confirmed as ſoon

the ſame. For there is but one kind of true holineſs in the univerſe. For the holineſs of Chriſt is of the ſame nature with the holineſs of God the Father. Chriſt is the expreſs image of his Father. And of his fulneſs we receive, and grace for grace. In regeneration, therefore, we are reſtored anew to that image of God, in which Adam was created. So that this 'principle of grace' is that whereby we are inclined to a diſintereſted, ſupreme regard to the Deity, an infinitely worthy being; and ſo diſpoſed

ſoon as the regenerate ſinner complies with the covenant of grace in the firſt act of ſaving faith. And thus, as Adam would have been entituled to eternal life on his compliance with the covenant of works; ſo the regenerate ſinner is entituled to eternal life on his compliance with the covenant of grace. For a confirmed habit of grace is eternal life. i. e. Life never to end—life everlaſting. Joh. 5. 24. *He that believeth hath everlaſting life.* Hence the promiſes of the goſpel are not made to the holy principle, paſſively conſidered, but to its acts and exerciſes; even as the bleſſings of the firſt covenant were not promiſed to that image of God, in which Adam began to exiſt, but to his active compliance with that covenant. And thus, that faith, by which we are *married to Chriſt*, is not an unregenerate, ſinful act; but, as our catechiſm expreſſes it, 'a ſaving grace.' But if faith is before regeneration, the act of a ſinner, *dead in ſin*, 'totally depraved,' it is not 'a ſaving GRACE;' but *a ſaving SIN.* Or elſe it is not *an act*, but a mere *paſſive thing*, and implies no *conſent of will.*

'*Queſtion.* But here it may be doubted, and objected againſt this 'poſition. If we cannot believe till we are quickened with ſpiritual 'life, as you ſay, and cannot be juſtified till we believe, as all ſay; 'then it will follow, that a regenerate ſoul may be in a ſtate of con-'demnation for a time and conſequently periſh, if death ſhould befal 'him in that juncture.' Thus Mr. *Flavel* ſtates the objection, and thus he anſwers it.

'*Solution.* To this I return; that when we ſpeak of the *priority* of 'this quickening work of the ſpirit to our actual believing, we ra-'ther underſtand it of the priority of *nature*, than of *time*, the nature 'and order of the work requiring it to be ſo; a vital principle muſt, 'in order of nature, be infuſed, *before* a vital act can be exerted. 'Firſt make the tree good, and then the fruit good: And admit we 'ſhould grant ſome priority in *time* alſo to this quickening principle, 'before actual faith; yet the abſurdity mentioned would be no way 'conſequent upon this conceſſion: for as the vital act of faith quick-'ly follows the regenerating principle, ſo the ſoul is abundantly 'ſecured againſt the danger objected; God never beginning any 'ſpecial work of grace upon the ſoul, and then leaving it, and the 'ſoul with it, in hazard; but preſerves both to the finiſhing and 'compleating of his gracious deſign.' Mr. Flavel's *Method of grace, Serm.* 5.

diſpoſed to love that character of him exhibited in his law, in which his infinite dignity is aſſerted, in the threatening of an infinite puniſhment for ſin. Even as ſelf-love is 'that principle' whereby a fallen creature is inclined to a ſupreme regard to himſelf, and to his own honor and intereſt, ſeparate from, independant of, and unſubordinate to God and his glory. Which ſelf-love is, in kind, different from, that love of happineſs which is eſſential to every holy being. The one is contrary to the holineſs of the divine nature, and the ſource of all our enmity againſt the Deity. The other is in perfect harmony with the divine nature and conſiſtent with the perfect love of the holineſs and juſtice of God, as exhibited in his law.

Mr. M. ſays, p. 48. 'But if this be true, that there 'muſt be a gracious principle implanted in the heart of 'a ſinner, before he is capable of any gracious acts; 'then for the ſame reaſon, there muſt be a corrupt prin-'ciple implanted in the heart of a holy creature (*Adam* 'for inſtance) before he is capable of any ſinful acts.'—The ſcripture teaches us, that *God created man in his own image*, whereby he was prepared to holy acts and exerciſes: but the ſcripture does not teach us, that God afterwards *created man in the image of the devil*, to render him capable of ſinful acts. And therefore 'if we would ac-'quieſce in the plain ſcripture account of theſe things, 'we ſhould readily allow,' that it was needful in order to prepare Adam for holy acts, that he ſhould be *created in the image of God*; yet it was not neceſſary 'for the ſame 'reaſon, that there ſhould be a corrupt principle im-'planted in his heart, before he was capable of any ſin-'ful act.'—For ſin begins in that which is merely negative; i. e. it begins in *not loving* God with all the heart; in ceaſing to exerciſe that regard to the Deity which is his due. Or in not having ſuch a ſenſe of his worthineſs of love and regard as ought to take place in the heart. But a ſenſe of God's infinite worthineſs of ſupreme love and perfect obedience may ceaſe to fill and govern the whole ſoul, without a previous implantation of a corrupt principle. It did ſo in Adam. For had he remained

under the entire government of ſupreme love to God, he would not have eaten the forbidded fruit; and as ſupreme love to God ceaſed, ſupreme ſelf-love took place of courſe: but it never was in Adam's heart before. He now, for the firſt time, began to have a frame of heart anſwerable to ſatan's words, *Ye ſhall be as Gods; ye ſhall not ſurely die.* And ſo he took and eat. In conſequence of which, this principle of ſupreme ſelf-love became a confirmed habit, and his whole heart was diſpoſed to juſtify himſelf in it. And thus Adam became totally depraved.

Remark 1. Holineſs, as it originally took place in human nature, had God for its author: and it was produced by a *creating* power, *in the image of God* CREATED *he him.* So it is reſtored by the ſame power. Eph. 2. 10. *We are his workmanſhip* CREATED *in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works.*—But that which is God's gift, Ezek. 36. 26. *A new heart will I give you.* Is alſo the ſinner's duty. Ezek. 18. 31. *Make you a new heart.* For total depravity and moral agency are conſiſtent: otherwiſe thoſe words, Eph. 2. 1. *Dead in ſin,* would be an expreſs contradiction.—To ſay, that the doctrine of *created holineſs* is abſurd, is to ſay that the bible is not the word of God: for this is one of the firſt doctrines taught in that book. *In the image of God created he him.*

Rem. 2. As Adam, while in the image of God, viewed the divine character exhibited in the moral law, in the ſame glorious point of light, in which God himſelf did, in which view the image of God in Adam partly conſiſted, and which view he totally loſt by the fall; ſo this view of the divine character is reſtored, when the image of God is renewed in regeneration. As it is written, Col. 3. 10. *The new man is renewed in knowledge, after the image of him, that created him*: i. e. that view of divine things, which is like that view which God hath of them, and which is *the image of his knowledge*, and which was originally in man before the fall, and was loſt by the fall, is *renewed*, is cauſed to exiſt anew, by the ſame power by which it at firſt exiſted, when *God created man in his own image.* 2 Cor. 4. 6. *For God who commanded the light*

light to ſhine out of darkneſs, (ſaying, Gen. 1. 3. *Let there be light, and there was light.*) By the ſame creating power, *hath ſhined into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt.*

Rem. 3. Habitually to view things as God does, and to be affected, and act accordingly, (i. e. compriſing both habit and act,) is the whole of that image of God, to which ſaints are recovered by the power of the Holy Ghoſt, imperfectly in this world, and perfectly in the world to come. And this image of God is the ſame, in kind, with that which Adam loſt. For the eſſential rectitude of the divine nature is the original ſtandard. The moral law is a tranſcript of this original. This law was written on Adam's heart. The mediatorial righteouſneſs of Chriſt is the law perfectly fulfilled. So Chriſt is the expreſs image of his Father. And ſaints are the expreſs image of Chriſt. And ſo there is but one kind of true holineſs in the univerſe. And this is that, which will lay the foundation for the perfect and eternal union, which will take place among all holy beings, in the kingdom of heaven. God on the throne, and every creature there in his proper place, by univerſal conſent, all of the ſame ſpirit.

Rem. 4. The falſe kinds of holineſs, exhibited in all falſe ſchemes of religion, differ, in kind, from the holineſs of heaven, which implies love to that character of God which is exhibited in the moral law, to which all unholy beings are in a ſtate of total oppoſition. For graceleſs men, who are pacified merely in a belief that they are ſafe, are, in any other view, of the ſame temper toward the Deity with the damned. For ſupreme ſelf-love governs every apoſtate creature, who is totally deſtitute of true love, of diſintereſted benevolence to the moſt high God, the Creator and Lord of heaven & earth.

SECTION IX.

Mat. xxviii. 19. *Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt.*

The Chriſtian creed; the Arminian creed; Mr. M's creed. Remarks on each.

THAT which is commonly called *The apoſtle's creed*, altho' not compiled by the apoſtles, yet is confeſſedly

ſedly of very ancient date. And the three principal articles of it are theſe. (1.) *I believe in God the Father, almighty maker of heaven and earth.* (2.) *I believe in Jeſus Chriſt his only Son.* (3.) *I believe in the Holy Ghoſt.* Which doubtleſs had reference to the *form of baptiſm* appointed by our bleſſed Saviour. He, therefore, who believes aright, and in a right manner, concerning Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, has the true Chriſtian faith, and is himſelf a true Chriſtian; and ſo is qualified to be active in offering up himſelf and his ſeed to God in Chriſtian baptiſm. But ſome of the chief things, which, in the inſpired writings, we are taught to believe concerning the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, are theſe, which may be expreſſed in the following articles, in contraſt with the *Arminian* creed, and with Mr. M's.

The Chriſtian creed.

1. *Concerning God the Father.*

I Believe that the moral character of God exhibited in the moral law is perfect in beauty, without a blemiſh. And that our diſaffection to the Deity is abſolutely inexcuſable & infinitely criminal; and juſtly deſerves the penalty threatened, infinitely dreadful as it is. In which view, the divine law is holy, juſt and good; worthy of the higheſt honor; and the ſalvation of the goſpel from ſtep to ſtep, from beginning to end, is of mere grace.

2. *Concerning God the Son.*

I believe that Jeſus Chriſt, in character of Mediator between God and man, loved the mo-

The Arminian Creed.

1. *Concerning God the Father.*

I Believe that it would have been unjuſt in God to have held mankind after the fall bound by the moral law, without any abatement. And that therefore, ſome relief was, in juſtice, due to a fallen world. And therefore, the relief granted is not wholly of grace; nor ought it be acknowledged as ſuch by us.

2. *Concerning God the Son*

I believe that Chriſt died to purchaſe an abatement of this unjuſt law; and to procure

Mr. Mather's Creed.

1. *Concerning God the Father.*

I Believe that the moral character of God exhibited in the moral law is not to us an object of love; and that it is not a duty, but a ſin, for us to love it: even contrary to the law of God. Becauſe to love it is the ſame thing as to love our own miſery. However God has given his Son to fulfil this law, and to vindicate and maintain the honor and dignity of his character exhibited in it; that ſinners might be pardoned while at enmity againſt it. p. 28, 41, 42, 43.

2. *Concerning God the Son.*

I believe that the character of God exhibited in the goſpel is ſo accomodated to the ſtate & temper

The Christian Creed.	*The Arminian Creed.*	*Mr. Mather's Creed.*
ral character of his Father, exhibited in the moral law, and lived and died to do it honor; that thro' him penitent believers might be saved, consistently with the divine justice and to the glory of divine grace. And in this view Christ crucified is the wisdom of God and the power of God.	salvation for us on terms which we are able to comply with, by his assistance.	temper of our hearts, that we shall love it as soon as known, without any new principle of grace; and even while we are at enmity against that character of God exhibited in the law. p. 22, 41—48.
3. *Concerning God the Holy Ghost.*	3. *Concerning God the Holy Ghost.*	3. *Concerning God the Holy Ghost.*
I believe that fallen man is so disaffected to the character of the Father and the Son, that no means whatsoever are sufficient to reconcile us to God, without the regenerating influences of the Holy Ghost. So that except we are born again we cannot see the kingdom of God. But in consequence of the regenerating influences of the Holy Ghost by which the vail is taken of from our hearts we behold the glory of the Lord, and every answerable affection is excited in us. And God and Christ are loved more than wives and children, than houses and lands; yea, than our own lives. Whereby we are disposed and prepared to deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow Christ: and publickly join with his people, and espouse his cause.	I believe that all men have sufficient assistance to comply with the terms of salvation, as it would be unjust to require more than we can do, without granting needful assistance to enable us to do it. And thus the injury done to us by the law is made up by the gospel. And in this view the divine character appears amiable in our eyes. And all mankind might love it, did they but know it without any new principle of Grace. See Dr. *Stebbins*, on the operations of the Spirit. Dr. *Whitby* on the five points.	I believe that all needful assistance of the holy spirit is promised to all baptized persons, to render external means effectual to salvation. But *light* is all that is needful. For no kind of regeneration will bring the human heart to love that character of God which is exhibited in the law: and the character of God exhibited in the gospel will naturally be loved, as soon as known, by every one, without any new principle of grace. But not loved very much; for I believe, that not more than one convert in a hundred, can say, with a good conscience, that he loves God at all. And so saints as well as sinners stand in need of the external covenant. First book, p. 59, 60. Second book, p. 43—48, 78, 79, 80, 81.

Remark

Remark 1. According to the *Arminian creed* mankind are the injured party, Chriſt died to get juſtice done us; and ſimply to have juſtice done us is all we need to bring us to be at peace with God. Let the terms of ſalvation be as low, as in juſtice they ought to be; let us have all that aſſiſtance which in juſtice we ought to have; and we need no more: the reſt we will do ourſelves. But for God to do us juſtice is not an act of grace.

2. According to Mr. *Mather*'s *creed*, the divine law, antecedent to a conſideration of the gift of Chriſt, requires us, on pain of eternal death, to do, that which is not our duty to do: yea, that, which, to do, in us, would be a ſinful thing, viz. to love God with all our heart. And ſo Chriſt fulfilled a law in our ſtead, which it was not our duty to fulfil: yea, a law, to obey which, in us, had been a ſinful thing.—But to pay a debt for us, which we ourſelves did not owe, was needleſs: and to honor a law which requires ſin, is a ſinful thing.

3. The divinity of God the Father is the firſt article of the *Chriſtian creed*, and ſo much the foundation of the whole Chriſtian ſyſtem, that if this is denied, the whole will ſink of courſe. Or in other words, that God the creator and moral governor of the univerſe is an abſolutely perfect, an infinitely glorious and amiable Being, infinitely worthy of ſupreme love and univerſal obedience from his creature man, is the foundation on which the law ſtands, and on which the whole goſpel ſcheme is built. To deny this point, is, in effect, to deny the whole of divine revelation. Atheiſm is at the bottom of infidelity. The contrariety of the carnal mind to God's true and real character is at bottom of Atheiſm. *The fool ſaith in his heart there is no God.*

4. It was wiſe in God, even at the expence of the blood of his own Son, to aſſert and maintain the honor of a law, which is a tranſcript of his moral character, and which all his apoſtate creatures join to hate; becauſe in this he does juſtice to himſelf, and to his government, while he ſhews mercy to ſinners.—But enmity againſt the divine law renders us blind to the wildom, glory, and

and grace of the goſpel, and is the cauſe of unbelief. 1 Cor. 1. 18. and 2. 14. Compared with Rom. 8. 7. and 3. 25. and 7. 12. Joh. 8. 42, 43.

5. He who underſtands and believes the Chriſtian creed, and who is affected and acts accordingly, is a Chriſtian, qualified for baptiſm, and entituled to eternal life. Mat. 13. 23. Mar. 16. 16. Joh. 17. 3.

6. He who believes the firſt article of the Chriſtian creed, with a living faith, has what Paul means by *repentance toward God.* And he who believes the ſecond article of the Chriſtian creed, with a living faith, has what Paul means by *faith toward our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* A belief of both which is implied in that faith by which a ſinner is juſtified. Luk. 3. 3. and 5. 31, 32. and 18. 14. and 24. 47. Act. 20. 21. Rom. 3. 19—26. And this faith is the firſt grace, and the ſum, ſeed and root of all Chriſtian graces. Mat. 13. 23. And is peculiar to the regenerate. Rom. 8. 7. 1 Joh. 5. 1. 1 Cor. 1. 18. and 2. 14. Joh. 1. 13. Luk. 8. 11—15. And is eternal life begun in the ſoul. Joh. 17. 3.

7. The love of the truth is the life of faith; or in other words, love to the truth believed is of the eſſence of a living faith, and that wherein it ſpecifically differs from the faith of devils, or a dead faith. Joh. 16. 27. 2 Theſ. 2. 10, 11, 12. Jam. 2. 26. And therefore,

8. There is a univerſal, inſeperable connection between a living faith, and a holy life, (which renders aſſurance attainable by believers in common. Mat. 13. 23. Jam. 2. 17, 18. 1 Joh. 2. 3.) So that thoſe words are ſtrictly true, 1 Joh. 2. 4. *He that ſaith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a* LIAR, *and the truth is not in him.*

But,

9. The *faith of devils*, attended with a *lying profeſſion*, is not that qualification for baptiſm, which our Saviour had in view, in Mar. 16. 16. *He that believeth and is baptized ſhall be ſaved.*

10. The goſpel may be, and ought to be preached to all in common, even to every *creature*, let their character be ever ſo vicious, as a means of their converſion: but

baptiſm

baptiſm is not to be adminiſtered to adults until they believe, and profeſs their faith in Chriſt and obedience to him. Mar. 16. 15, 16. Act. 8. 37. Rom. 10. 9, 10.—For,

11. The adult perſon, in the act of offering himſelf to God in baptiſm, practically declares, that he devotes himſelf to God thro' Jeſus Chriſt, and ſo *puts on Chriſt*. Gal. 3. 26, 27. But a falſe and lying profeſſion is condemned by God in the old teſtament. Pſal. 78. 36, 37. Eccl. 5. 5. and by Jeſus Chriſt in the new. Luk. 6. 46. Mat. 22. 12. Luk. 14. 25—35. 1 Joh. 2. 4. Rev. 2. 2. 9. And is a means, not of ſalvation, but of deſtruction. Act. 5. 1—11.

12. The adult perſon, who is unqualified to offer himſelf in baptiſm, is equally unqualified to offer his infant child in baptiſm. For he, who is without a heart to devote himſelf to God, is equally without a heart to devote his child to God.

13. Pride, in ambitious minds, may excite very ſtrong inclinations to make a falſe profeſſion; but a well enlightened conſcience never will dictate this, as matter of duty.

14. It is the indiſpenſable duty of every one, to whom the goſpel comes, to become a real Chriſtian without delay: and then without delay to make a public profeſſion of chriſtianity: and then to attend the ſeals. But to ſeal the covenant of grace with our hands, while we reject it in our hearts, is to act deceitfully with our Maker. And to invent a new covenant which God never exhibited, and a new ſcheme of religion to ſupport it, which God never revealed, ſuited to the hearts of thoſe, who reject the covenant of grace, and who are under the curſe of the covenant of works, is to find a reſting place for the wicked.

SECTION X.

Mr. Mather's ſcheme of religion inconſiſtent with itſelf.

OUR author profeſſes in his *preface* not 'to be fond of his own judgment;' but to ſtand 'ready to give it up' when any one will do 'the friendly office of ſetting *light* before him.' And he deſires, that if there be any 'material

'material miſtakes' in his ſcheme, they may be 'pointed out.' It is therefore to be hoped, that he will not be diſpleaſed, if in addition to the *light* already ſet before him, ſome of the various inconſiſtent ſentiments of his ſcheme are contraſted, whereby he may be farther aſſiſted to diſcern, that his ſcheme muſt be wrong ſome where: for the truth is ever conſiſtent with itſelf.

1. In his firſt book, he ſays, p. 59. 'A child dedicated to God in baptiſm is thereby brought into covenant with God, and has a promiſe left to it, of the means of grace, and the ſtrivings of God's holy Spirit, in order to render them effectual for ſalvation.' But in his ſecond book, he ſays, p. 51. That they muſt 'ſubmit to a ſovereign God.' But if they have 'a *covenant right* to the ſtrivings of the holy Spirit,' if they have 'a promiſe,' then they do not lie at God's ſovereign mercy in the caſe; but may plead the *covenant* and *promiſe* of God.

2. In his firſt book, p. 8. he endeavours to prove that the covenant with Abraham, Gen. 17. was not the covenant of grace, becauſe 'it might be broken.' Which implies, that it had ſome condition, which if not fulfilled, all the bleſſings of it would be forfeited. But in his ſecond book, p. 60, 61, 62. he endeavours to prove, that the covenant with Abraham, Gen. 17. was not the covenant of grace, becauſe it had no conditions, but all the bleſſings of it were promiſed to Abraham and his ſeed 'abſolutely and unconditionally;' on which hypotheſis this covenant 'could not be broken.'—But his two books are not only inconſiſtent with each other, but this laſt book is inconſiſtent with itſelf. And to the inſtances which have already been taken notice of in the preceeding ſections, ſome few more may here be pointed out.

3. That man muſt be a moral agent, poſſeſſed of every qualification eſſential to moral agency, previous, and in order to his being bound by God's law, is a fundamental point with Mr. M. p. 6, 50, &c. That man may be bound by the moral law to be a moral agent, to have the qualifications eſſential to moral agency, is with him another fundamental point. p. 6. But as theſe two fun-

damental points in his ſcheme are inconſiſtent with each other, ſo they cannot both be true. He ſays, 'Self-love is eſſential to moral agency;' and yet this eſſential qualification of a moral agent 'is a duty required of us by God's law. But according to him the law cannot bind us unleſs we are already moral agents. Therefore it cannot bind us to be moral agents. For then a man need not be a moral agent, previous, and in order to his being bound by the moral law; which yet he maintains.

4. He ſays, p. 10. 'That Adam, by becoming guilty was *totally* depraved,' and yet according to him Adam's depravity was not *total*, for he ſtill continued to exerciſe *that love to himſelf, which the law of God requires*, in a conformity to which the image of God conſiſted in which he was created. p. 6. and p. 12. 'Perhaps' he alſo continued to exerciſe toward God 'the love of eſteem and benevolence.'

5. He ſays, p. 6. That the divine law requires us 'to love God with all our hearts,' and that it alſo requires us 'to love ourſelves.' And he adds, that this 'ſelf-love is abſolutely inconſiſtent with the love of God.' So that, according to him, the divine law requires of us in our guilty ſtate, two *duties, in their own nature, abſolutely inconſiſtent.* And therefore he boldly affirms, that it is 'contrary to the law of God' for us while in our guilty ſtate to love God with all our hearts; and yet he ſays, p. 51. That God has 'given us his law to ſhew us what out duty is.' And that we are *juſtly condemned to eternal miſery* for not obeying of it. And this law, he calls 'a glorious law,' and the character exhibited in it he calls 'glorious;' and even ſuppoſes that the Son of God became incarnate, lived and died to 'honor this law,' and to 'vindicate and maintain the honor and dignity of the divine character exhibited in it.' p. 22, 26, 27. 28. Whereas for God to give us a rule of duty, requiring things in their own nature abſolutely inconſiſtent, on pain of eternal death, would be an infinite reproach to the Deity. And to give his Son to die to do honor to ſuch a law would be inconſiſtent with all his perfections. And

yet

yet he asserts that the gospel, which is supposed to reveal this shocking scene, is 'glorious,' and even 'more glorious than the law;' whereas if his scheme is true, there is no glory in law, or gospel; unless it be glorious to require inconsistences on pain of eternal death; and glorious to do the highest honor, before the whole intellectual system, to a law, in its own nature, contradictory.

5. He represents the divine law, as requiring things not only inconsistent in their own nature with each other; but also inconsistent with our moral agency. For he says, p. 5. 'A principle of self-love is essential to us as moral agents.' And yet he asserts that this 'self-love must be totally excluded from any place,' in the heart of a guilty creature, if he loves God. p. 10. For 'Love to God and self-love are absolutely inconsistent.' And so, according to him, the moral law requires of us that love to God, which is inconsistent with our being moral agents. p. 50. 53. And yet, according to him, if we are not moral agents, we cannot be bound by the moral law to any obedience at all. Therefore,

6. He is necessitated to maintain, that man by the fall ceased to be a moral agent, and that it was no longer his duty to love God, for the law did not bind him, 'its binding authority respected not his obedience.' This was the state of Adam before the revelation of a Mediator, 'because it was inconsistent with self-love to exercise true love to God.' p. 50. And he asserts, p. 18. That 'Mankind at this day, antecedent to their exercising faith in Christ, are in much the same condition as 'Adam was after he sinned.' Particularly, he says, p. 20. 'That they are under the same inability of loving God that Adam was,' viz. It is 'absolutely inconsistent with that self-love which is essential to moral agency.' And therefore the unregenerate are not moral agents, nor bound by the moral law to obedience. And *where there is no law, there is no transgression.* And therefore Adam's total depravity, which took place after the first sin, was not of a criminal nature: And the same is true of the unregenerate now, who 'are under the same inability

inability of loving God that Adam was.' And therefore total depravity does not disqualify for sealing ordinances.

And yet in direct contradiction to all this, he affirms, that the unregenerate, while such, are moral agents, bound by the law to the same perfect obedience, which was required of Adam before the fall. p. 53. 'This I will readily grant, man is a moral agent, bound by the moral law, to love God with all his heart; and therefore God may consistently require this of him, and man is *wholly* to blame for not loving.' For, p. 27. 'nothing short of perfection may be looked upon as the whole of what is required.' For he adds, 'to suppose that God has receded from his original demand of perfection, made in the law,—implies that this law was not good,' which is 'evidently a reflection upon the divine Being, whose law it is,' and 'a reproach upon Christ, who has honoured that law.' And accordingly he affirms, p. 51. That 'God has given his law to shew us what our duty is;' and he adds, p. 52. 'That by the law is the knowledge of sin.' Which supposes, that 'the binding authority of the law does respect our obedience,' as much as it did Adam's before the fall. And that therefore we are moral agents with respect to the law of perfection, as really as he was. And that therefore it is not inconsistent, in any child of Adam, with that self-love, which is essential to moral agency, to yield a perfect obedience to the moral law. And that therefore we are not at all depraved by nature. For this supposed inconsistency, he says, 'is the true reason, and the *only* reason' of the depravity of our nature. For had it not been for this inconsistency, Adam would have continued to love God after the fall as he did before. p. 44. 'He would have continued still to exercise the same delight in the divine perfections, as he had done before.' And yet he had said, p. 10. 'That Adam by becoming guilty was totally depraved.' And if he was totally depraved, and if total depravity and moral agency are consistent, if God 'may consistently require us to love God with all

all our hearts,' and if we 'are wholly to blame' for not loving; then our total depravity is totally criminal. But to perſiſt obſtinately in this crime, that is, to continue impenitent, and unreconciled to God, after all the means uſed with us by God himſelf, diſqualifies a man to be active in ſealing God's covenant, for the ſame reaſon, that obſtinacy in any other crime does. Or if he will ſay, 'To love God is the ſame thing as to love miſery,' and ſo our depravity is a calamity, but not a crime; then he muſt ſay, that we ceaſe to be moral agents, and the law ceaſes to bind us: which, to uſe his own words, 'implies, that this law was not good, which is evi-'dently a reflection upon the divine Being, whoſe law it 'is, and a reproach upon Chriſt, who has honored that 'law.'

7. Mr. M. is very zealous for a *preparatory work*, and to have the unregenerate ſinner *ſtrive*. p. 47—54. But without any conſiſtence with himſelf. For on his ſcheme, what can the ſinner conſiſtenly ſtrive to do? not to love that character of God which is exhibited in the law; for this, according to him, is the ſame thing as to 'love his own miſery,' which is 'contrary to the law,' and in its own nature impoſſible. Not to love that character of God which is revealed in the goſpel; for the uninlightened ſinner is by him ſuppoſed not to know it; p. 43. And to love an unknown character, implies a contradiction, and ſo is abſolutely impoſſible. What then would Mr. M. have the ſinner do, or drive to do? Let us attend to his own words, p. 51, 52. God 'has given us 'his law, not only to ſhew us what our duty is; but 'alſo to let *light* before us, whereby we may obtain a 'proper conviction of our guilt. *By the law, is the know-'ledge of ſin.* He has repeatedly commanded them *to 'conſider their ways*; and calls upon them to exerciſe 'their reaſon. *Come now and let us reaſon together ſaith 'the Lord.*' But if God has *given us his law to ſhew us what our duty is*, and if *by the law is the knowledge of ſin*, and if we *conſider* this, and if we *exerciſe our reaſon* on the ſubject, then we muſt conclude, that it is, now, every day, the

the duty of all mankind to love that character of God which is exhibited in the moral law; and that it is the duty of all to whom the goſpel comes, to love that character of God which is revealed in the goſpel; and that it is exceeding ſinful to live in the neglect of theſe duties. But if a ſinner ſhould thus begin to *conſider* and *exerciſe his reaſon*, Mr. M. would ſoon ſtop him, by ſaying, *The uninlightened do not know that character of God which is revealdin the goſpel, and ſo cannot love it: and to love that character of God which is revealed in the law, is the ſame thing as to love their own miſery, which is contrary to the law, and ought not to be done.*—What then ſhall the ſinner do? or what ſhall he ſtrive to do? Mr. M. ſays, (p. 51.) that 'Such a conviction of our guilt, and juſt deſert of ſuf-'fering the curſe of the law, as ſhall humble us, and 'bring us to ſubmit to a ſovereign God, is neceſſary to 'fit and prepare our hearts to cloſe with Chriſt.' But by what means ſhall ſuch convictions be obtained? How will you convince the ſinner, that he deſerves eternal damnation for *not continuing in all things written in the book of the law to do them*, particularly, for *neglecting to love God*, while he firmly believes, that 'the love of God and ſelf-love are abſolutely inconſiſtent?' and that, therefore, it is 'contrary to the law' which requires ſelf-love, to love God. The more the ſinner *conſiders*, and *exerciſes his reaſon*, the more clearly will he ſee the inconſiſtence of theſe things.—Or, will Mr. M. tell the ſinner, as in p. 53. to ſtrive 'to obtain thoſe diſcoveries of God thro' Chriſt, by 'which he will be reconciled to God?'—But, why, ſeeing on Mr. M's ſcheme, the ſinner has no prejudices againſt this character of God to combat & ſtrive againſt, but is naturally diſpoſed to love it, as ſoon as known; why, if this be the caſe, ſhould not *the diſcoveries*, already made in the bible, be immediately received and embraced? Did not Jacob love Rachel the firſt time he ſaw her? or did he ſpend two or three months, or as many years, after the firſt ſight of her perſon, *ſtriving for a diſcovery of her beauty?*

8. Mr. M. ſays, p. 9. That to Adam after his fall it muſt

must appear 'in every view, inconſiſtent with the divine perfections,' that he ſhould eſcape the curſe of the law. But in theſe circumſtances, p. 10. 'To delight in God was the ſame thing as to delight in his own miſery;' and therefore, he adds, 'That Adam, by becoming guilty, was totally depraved.' Becauſe now 'the love of God and ſelf-love were abſolutely inconſiſtent.' And he ſays, p. 10. 'This was the true reaſon, and the *only* reaſon, why Adam could not love God after the fall.' And therefore as ſoon as a door of hope was opened by the revelation of a Mediator, Adam inſtantly returned to the love of God. 'And there is nothing in our fallen circumſtances to prevent' our doing ſo too. p. 44. And that *without any new principle of grace.* p. 48. But if theſe things are true, it will follow, (1) that as ſoon as any man believes, that there is forgiveneſs with God for ſinners through Jeſus Chriſt, he will ceaſe to be totally depraved: becauſe now 'the true reaſon and the only reaſon,' of his total depravity is removed: And, therefore, (2) every man who believes the goſpel to be true is regenerate. And, therefore, (3) every man who knows, that he believes the goſpel to be true, does with equal certainty know that he is regenerate. Becauſe this belief and regeneration are infallibly connected, according to Mr. M. But, (4) according to him, 'none 'but ſuch as profeſs the Chriſtian religion ought to be 'admitted into the church.' And (5) according to him, none ought to profeſs, that they believe the goſpel to be true, unleſs they are infallibly certain, that they do believe it to be true. For, ſpeaking of the profeſſion which is made when any join with the church, he ſays, p. 79. 'Suppoſe a man brought into a civil court, as a wit-'neſs to a particular fact; and being ſworn, ſhould poſ-'ſitively declare the thing to be fact: and after he comes 'out of court, his neighbour ſhould aſk him, whether 'he had any certain knowledge of the fact, about which 'he had given his evidence: and he ſhould ſay, *No, I 'am not certain of it; but I hope it is ſo, it is any prevailing 'opinion; altho' I muſt confeſs, I have many doubts and fears,*

'*whether*

'*whether there is any truth in it, or not.* Would not all 'mankind agree, to call ſuch a one, a perjured perſon, 'who had taken a falſe oath?' No one, therefore, according to his ſcheme may profeſs, that he believes the goſpel to be true, unleſs he is infallibly certain of the fact, that he does believe it to be true. But if regeneration and this belief are infallibly connected, then this profeſſor muſt be infallibly certain of his regeneration, and ſo not one ſoul, on Mr. M's ſcheme, may, or can be admitted into the church, as graceleſs. And thus his ſcheme overthrows itſelf.

Nor is there any way to avoid this, but for Mr. M. to ſay, *A man may be infallibly certain of the truth of the goſpel, and ſo of God's readineſs to be reconciled to ſinners, as therein revealed; and yet after all remain totally depraved, and an enemy to God.*---But to ſay this, would be to give up the fundamental principle on which his whole ſcheme is built, viz. that 'the true and the only reaſon' of total depravity, is the apprehenſion, that it is inconſiſtent with the divine perfections, to forgive ſin. In which view 'ſelf-love and the love of God are inconſiſtent.' And if this is given up, his whole ſcheme ſinks of courſe. For if this is not *the true and only reaſon* of total depravity, he is wholly wrong from the foundation to the top ſtone. And if an apprehenſion, that it is inconſiſtent with the divine perfections to forgive ſin, is *the true and only reaſon* of total depravity, then a belief that God can conſiſtently forgive ſin, would at once regenerate us. For it is an old maxim, *Remove the cauſe and the effect will ceaſe.* Every man, therefore, according to Mr. M. who believes the goſpel to be true, is at once reconciled to God. Nor may any be received into the church, until they believe it to be true. And ſo no graceleſs man, as ſuch, can be admitted into the church. Becauſe no infidel, as ſuch, may be admitted. And all but infidels are regenerate, if Mr. M's ſcheme is true. And then the ſcheme of religion which he has advanced, in order to ſupport the external covenant, were it true, would effectually overthrow the grand point he had in view.

SECT.

SECTION XI.

The extraordinary methods Mr. Mather has taken to ſupport his ſcheme, and keep himſelf in countenance.

THE ordinary methods of ſupporting religious principles, by ſcripture and reaſon, which Mr. M. has taken to ſupport his external covenant, we have already attended to. And I think Mr. M. is much to be commended for coming out boldly, like an honeſt man, and giving the public ſuch an honeſt account of his ſcheme of religion, by which he deſigned to ſupport what he had advanced in his former piece concerning the external covenant. If every writer on that ſide of the queſtion would do the ſame, the controverſy would ſoon come to an end.

But there are various other methods, which Mr. M. has taken to keep himſelf in countenance, and to perſuade his readers that his ſcheme is right, and that the plan is wrong on which the churches in New-England were formed, when this country was firſt ſettled: and particularly, that the *ſynod* at *Say Brook* were wrong, in that reſolve, which they unanimouſly came into, viz. '*That none ought to be admitted as members, in order to full communion in all the ſpecial ordinances of the goſpel, but ſuch as—credibly profeſs a cordial ſubjection to Jeſus Chriſt*:' Various other methods, I ſay, of a different nature, and which are not ſo commendable.

1. One extraordinary method he takes to keep himſelf in countenance is to pretend, that I had 'wholly miſrepreſented his ſentiments,' and given his ſcheme 'the bad name of a graceleſs covenant,' and pointed 'all my arguments not againſt 'any thing that he had written,' nor ſo much as 'eſſayed to confute one ſingle argument' that he had offered. This pretence is very extraordinary. (1) Becauſe if his covenant is not a *graceleſs covenant*, it will not anſwer the end by him propoſed. For if it does not promiſe its bleſſings to graceleſs men, as ſuch, upon graceleſs conditions; then graceleſs men, as ſuch, with only graceleſs qualifications, cannot enter into it. For he affirms, that none can conſiſtently profeſs a compli-

ance with the covenant of grace, without the moſt full and perfect aſſurance. p. 78. 79, 80. (2) This pretence is very extraordinary, becauſe he had in his firſt book, p. 58. declared his external covenant, in expreſs terms, to be 'diſtinct from the covenant of grace;' and in this ſecond book ſets himſelf profeſſedly to prove the ſame point over again. p. 60, 61, 62. But if his external covenant is 'diſtinct from the covenant of grace,' it is either the *covenant of works*, or a *graceleſs covenant*, or a *covenant which requires no conditions at all*: for no other ſort of covenant can be thought of. But if Mr. M's external covenant is abſolute, and unconditional, then a Pagan, a Turk, or a Jew, as ſuch, hath as good right to the Lord's-table, as to hear the goſpel preached. And if his external covenant is the ſame with the covenant of works, then no mere man ſince the fall is qualified to join with the church. And if his external covenant is the covenant of grace, then no graceleſs man, as ſuch, is qualified to enter into it and ſeal it. It is, therefore, nay it muſt be a *graceleſs covenant*, or nothing at all. (3) This pretence is very extraordinary, becauſe Mr. M. was ſo pinched with what I had advanced againſt his ſcheme, that he had no way to get rid of my arguments, but to deny firſt principles, and give up the doctrines contained in the public approved formulas of the church of *Scotland*, and the churches in *New-England*, and advance a *new ſcheme* of religion never before publiſhed in *New-England*. And why did not he point out at leaſt *one ſingle argument* of his, which he judged to be unanſwered? Or why did not he mention *one ſingle inſtance*, wherein I had repreſented his covenant to be more *graceleſs* than it was? Or what need was there, if I had ſaid nothing to the purpoſe, to expoſe himſelf and his cauſe, by the publication of ſuch a ſyſtem of *new notions*, to make all the country ſtare? *

2. The

* Mr. M. offered five arguments, in his firſt Book, p. 78. to ſupport his external covenant. Theſe five arguments the reader may find anſwered, in my former piece. p. 16, 17, 18, 65, 65, 69. And if he will read

2. The loud out-cry which he makes of *new divinity, new divinity*, is another of the extraordinary methods which he takes to keep himſelf in countenance. And it is very extraordinary in him, to raiſe this cry, on this occaſion, in anſwer to me, and that when he himſelf was writing ſuch an anſwer. (1) Becauſe I was juſtifying the *old ſcheme*, on which our churches in this country were originally ſettled, *the good old way*; and he wrote with a deſign to bring in a *new ſcheme*, called by the name of the *external covenant*, both name and thing unknown in all the public formulas approved by our churches, and abſolutely inconſiſtent with ſome of the fundamental articles of our *confeſſion of faith*, and *catechiſms*. (2) Becauſe, in order to juſtify *the good old way*, and confute his *new ſcheme*, I built my arguments on the *good old proteſtant* doctrines of *the perfection of the divine law*, and *total depravity*, as held forth in ſcripture, and in our public formulas, without any one new ſentiment; yea, without expreſſing old ſentiments in ſtronger language, than the language of ſcripture, and of that confeſſion of faith, which Mr. M. himſelf profeſſes to believe. While on the other hand, Mr. M. was writing not only in the defence of *a new ſcheme*; but endeavouring to juſtify it by a whole ſyſtem of *new divinity*, never before advanced, ſo far as I know, in *New-England*.

read my piece thro' he may find the two points fully proved, which I undertook to prove, on which the whole controverſy turns, viz. That there is but one covenant, of which baptiſm and the Lord's-ſupper are ſeals, even the covenant of grace; and that the doctrine of an external graceleſs covenant is unſcriptural.—Some wonder why Mr. M. did not make a particular reply, and wonder more why, inſtead of a particular reply, he ſhould advance ſuch an inconſiſtent, abſurd, ſhocking ſcheme of religion, in ſupport of the external covenant, which inſtead of ſupporting, rather tends to ſink it. For, ſay they, if the external covenant cannot be ſupported without going into this ſcheme of religion, we will give it up.—But I wonder not at Mr. M's conduct in all this. The external covenant cannot be ſupported, but by overthrowing the ſcripture ſcheme of religion, and eſtabliſhing Mr. M's ſcheme in its room. His ſcheme of religion is abſolutely neceſſary to ſupport his external covenant.—Without the introduction of Mr. M's new ſcheme of religion, my former piece can receive no anſwer at all. He could not be ſilent. He muſt take this way, or none at all.

England However, it is not entirely *new*. It was ſome years ago publiſhed in London, by Mr. *Cudworth*, and an anſwer to it was printed in Boſton, 1762, in *An Eſſay on the nature and glory of the goſpel*, before referred to.

3. Another extraordinary method, which he takes to keep himſelf in countenance, is to impute the moſt abſurd and odious doctrines to thoſe whom he oppoſes, which neither they, nor any chriſtian writer ever believed to be true. Particularly, *That the enmity of the carnal mind againſt God conſiſts in diſintereſted malice. That in regeneration new natural faculties are created in us. That the unregenerate, being without theſe new natural faculties, let their hearts be ever ſo good, are under a natural impoſſibility of harkening to the call of the goſpel. That we muſt be willing to be damned in order to be prepared for Chriſt. That Chriſt has no hand in our reconciliation to God.* To be ſure, I was never acquainted with any man, or any book, which held theſe points.—Should it be affirmed concerning a very poor, and very lazy man, that *altho' he is convinced in his conſcience, that it is his duty and intereſt to be induſtrious; yet the more he thinks of it, the more averſe he feels to it*: Would this amount to ſaying, that this lazy man has *a diſintereſted malice againſt induſtry*. Or ſhould it be affirmed concerning the unregenerate, that *God hath not given them eyes to ſee, nor ears to hear*; would this amount to ſaying, that they are deſtitute of eyes and ears, conſidered as natural faculties, and ſo can neither ſee nor hear; and therefore are not at all to blame for their ſpiritual blindneſs and deafneſs —Or ſhould a wiſe and good father, when his impudent, haughty child, about to be corrected for a crime, inſolently ſay, *Well, father, if you do whip me, I ſhall never love you again as long as I live*: Should a wiſe and good father ſay to ſuch a child, 'You deſerve 'to be whiped, nor will I ever forgive you until you will 'own that it is *good enough* for you, and that it is not a '*blemiſh*, but a *beauty* in your father's character to be diſ-'poſed to maintain good government in his houſe.' Would that amount to ſaying, that *the child muſt be willing to be whiped in order to prepare him for a pardon?*—Or

'if

if, by the regenerating influences of the holy Spirit, communicated thro' Jesus Christ, the only Mediator, as the fruits of his purchase, the holiness and justice of the divine nature are viewed as a beauty in the divine character, by the true penitent, will it hence follow, 'That 'there was no need of Christ to die, or to be exalted, 'that thro' him, *repentance and remission of sins*, might be 'given unto us, consistently with the divine law.'—It is true, that there is no need of Christ to make us amends for the injury done us in the divine law, and so to reconcile our angry minds to the Deity, and bring us to forgive our Maker. Such a Christ would suit the *taste* of a carnal heart. But a true penitent, having *a new taste*, already grants that God and his law are wholly right, perfect in beauty, without a blemish, prior to the consideration of the gift of Christ: and this prepares him to see the wisdom and grace of God, in giving his Son to die upon the cross, in the manner, and for the purpose, set forth in the gospel. Rom. 3. 25. 1 Cor. 1. 18.

4. Another extraordinary method Mr. M. has taken, is to insinuate that the sacramental controversy turns on these absurd doctrines. Whereas, in truth, he cannot produce an instance of any one writer, on our side of the question, who ever believed these absurd doctrines, much less ever built his arguments on them. Let him read Mr. *Richard Baxter*, Dr. *Watts*, Dr. *Guise*, Dr. *Doddridge*, Mr. *Henry*, Mr. *Flavel*, and look thro' the *Westminster confession of faith*, and *catechisms*, and read over President *Edwards*, Mr. *Green*, and others in these parts of the world, who have wrote on the subject, and he will not find a syllable to countenance him, in such an insinuation. Nay, the chief of the arguments used, by writers on our side of the question, are conclusive, to prove that baptism and the Lord's supper are seals of the covenant of grace, and of no other covenant, without entering into any dispute about the perfection of the divine law, total depravity, regeneration, &c. &c. The point is so clear and plain, that *Calvinists*, *Arminians*, *Neonomians*, *Arians*, &c. have agreed in this, while they have differed in almost every

thing

thing elſe. If we may believe Dr. *Increaſe Mather*, it was, in his day, the 'common doctrine' *of proteſtants in oppoſition to papiſts*, 'that it is only a juſtifying faith, which giveth right to baptiſm before God,' how much ſoever they differed in other matters. And as to all the orthodox, the celebrated Dr. *Van Maſtricht*, in his treatiſe on regeneration, ſays, 'As to the baptiſm of *adults*, that, 'if *rightly* adminiſtered, doth, by the conſent of *all the* 'orthodox, certainly preſuppoſe regeneration as already 'effected.'——But this leads me to obſerve,

5. Another very extraordinary method Mr. M. takes to keep himſelf in countenance, is by miſrepreſenting that plan, unanimouſly agreed to by the *ſynod* at *Say-brook*, and on which the churches in New-England, in general, were formed, at the firſt ſettling of the country, which alone I was endeavouring to juſtify, 'as a very groundleſs and 'unreaſonable notion of the *Anabaptiſts*, in which Dr. 'Bellamy and a few others have joined with them.' p. 66. And at the ſame time claiming the *Weſtminſter aſſembly*, Mr. *Shepard*, Mr. *Jonathan Dickinſon*, and Mr. *Peter Clarke* as friends to *his external covenant*. So that one would think, that ſcarce any are on our ſide of the queſtion, but the *Anabaptiſts*. Now this is very extraordinary in Mr. M. (1) becauſe in his former book, he ſpeaks a very different language, well knowing how the matter really ſtands. p. 59. 'Shall I then prevail with 'them, to lay aſide all prejudice, all attachment to *received maxims*, all veneration for *great names*.' For he had before him the ſentiments of the proteſtant world collected, by the late learned Mr. *Foxcroft*, in an *appendix* to preſident *Edwards*'s *Inquiry*, &c. And he well knew that *received maxims* and *great names*, ſtood in the way of his *new ſcheme*. (2) It is very extraordinary that he ſhould ſay, that *his external covenant* is *included in the covenant of grace*, deſcribed by *the aſſembly of divines at Weſtminſter*. p. 61. When, as has been before ſhewn, the doctrines of *the perfection of the divine law*, and of *total depravity*, as held by that *aſſembly*, are inconſiſtent with *the exiſtence of his external covenant*. And in their *confeſſion of faith*,

faith, chap. 29. they ſay, ‘ *all ungodly perſons* as they are ‘ unfit to enjoy communion with him, ſo are they un- ‘ worthy of the Lord's-table, and cannot without great ‘ ſin againſt Chriſt, while they continue ſuch, partake of ‘ theſe holy myſteries, or be admitted thereto.’—Where- as, the very profeſſed deſign of his external covenant is to open a door, that *ungodly men*, as ſuch, *ſhould be admit- ted to partake of theſe holy myſteries*. And (3) it is equally extraordinary that he ſhould pretend that Mr. *Jonathan Dickinſon* was a friend *to his external covenant*, when in his *Dialogue* on *the divine right of infant baptiſm*, he proves that the covenant with Abraham Gen. 17. was the co- venant of grace itſelf, in oppoſition to the *Anabaptiſts*, who, with Mr. M. maintain the covenant with Abra- ham Gen. 17. was not the covenant of grace. And having proved that covenant, to be the covenant of grace, then proceeds, on this hypotheſis, to prove *the divine right of infant baptiſm*. Dr. *Gill* wrote an anſwer to this piece of Mr. *Dickinſon*'s. Mr. *Peter Clark* wrote a reply to Dr. *Gill*, in which he ſpends above a hundred pages in prov- ing the covenant in Gen. 17. to be ‘ a pure covenant of grace,’ in anſwering Dr. *Gill*'s objections, which are the ſame for ſubſtance with Mr. M's *five arguments* in his firſt book, p. 7, 8. and in eſtabliſhing infant baptiſm on this foundation. And he expreſsly affirms, p. 208. ‘ *Ex- ‘ cept a man be born again he cannot enter into the kingdom of ‘ God.* And if without regeneration no man can enter ‘ into the kingdom of God, then ſurely not into cove- ‘ nant with God.’ But the unregenerate, as ſuch, can enter into covenant with God, on the plan of Mr. M's *external covenant*. And yet Mr. M. pretends that there is ‘ no material difference’ between theſe authors and his ſcheme. But (4) it is more extraordinary ſtill, that Mr. M. ſhould bring in Mr. *Shepard*, as a friend to *his exter- nal covenant*, when the piece he refers to, p. 61. is not wrote on Mr. M's ſcheme, but on a ſcheme eſſentially different. And when Mr. *Shepard* in his *ſermons on the parable of the ten virgins* has ſo plainly declared his mind.

Theſe

Theſe are his very words. Attend to them, candid reader, and ſay, was Mr. *Shepard* in Mr. M's ſcheme?

'We may ſee hence one juſt ground of that diligent 'and narrow ſearch and trial, churches here do or ſhould 'make of all thoſe whom they receive to be fellow-'members. The Lord Jeſus will make a very ſtrict 'ſearch and examination of wiſe and fooliſh, when he 'comes, and will put a difference between them then. 'May not men, nor churches imitate the Lord Jeſus 'according to their light now? If indeed all the con-'gregation of the baptized were holy, then as *Korah* ſaid, '*They take too much upon them.* If Chriſt at his coming, 'would make neither examination, nor ſeparation, not 'only of people baptized at large, but of profeſſors, and 'glorious profeſſors of his truth and name; if churches 'were not ſet to diſcern between harlots and virgins, 'fooliſh virgins and wiſe, as much as in them lies, that ſo 'ſome of the glory of Chriſt may be ſeen in his churches 'here, as well as at the laſt day; then the gate might 'be opened wide, and flung off the hinges too for all 'comers; and you might call the churches of Chriſt, 'the inn and tavern of Chriſt to receive all ſtrangers, if 'they will pay for what they call for, and bear ſcot and 'lot in the town, and not the houſe and temple of Chriſt 'only to entertain his friends. But (beloved) the church 'hath the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and what 'they bind and looſe, following the example and rule of 'Chriſt, is bound and looſed in heaven, and they judge 'in the room of Chriſt. 1 Cor. 5. 4, 5. 2 Cor. 2. 11. 'Whom the church caſts out, and bids depart to ſatan, 'Chriſt doth. Whom the church receives to it ſelf, 'Chriſt doth. We ſhould receive in none but ſuch as 'have viſible right to Chriſt, and communion of ſaints. 'None have a right to Chriſt in his ordinances, but ſuch 'as ſhall have communion with Chriſt at his coming to 'judge the world. Hence if we could be ſo eagle-eyed, 'as to diſcern them now that are hypocrites, we ſhould 'exclude them now, as Chriſt will, becauſe they have 'no right. But that we cannot do, the Lord will there-

'fore

'fore do it for his churches. But yet let the churches 'learn from this, to do what they can, for the Lord, 'now.—The apoſtle gives a ſad charge, Heb. 12. 15. *Look diligently, leſt a root of bitterneſs grow up.* The a-'poſtle doth not ſay, 'tis no matter what roots you ſet 'in Chriſt's garden; only when they ſpring up, & begin to 'ſeed & infect others, then have a care of them; but look 'there be not a root there.—*Look diligently to it.* It's ill coun-'ſel to the gardener to ſay, have a care to weed your garden; 'but 'tis no matter, God looks not that you ſhould be care-'ful of your ſeed, ſo long as it be ſeed. Nay, the Lord that 'forbids me to ſuffer weeds to grow, forbids my careleſneſs 'in ſowing what ſeeds I pleaſe.—It is the judgment of 'ſome divines, that the firſt ſin of Adam, and his wife, 'was in ſuffering the ſerpent to enter into the garden, 'uncalled for. *The ruin of a church may be, the letting in 'of ſome one ill member.*

'Objection. *But the primitive church never received in a-'ny with ſuch ſtrict confeſſions, and large examination; three 'thouſand in a day were admitted.*'

'*Anſ.* I remember a godly divine in anſwering an ob-'jection of late repentance from the example of the thief; 'having whipt it with many other rods, at the laſt laſh-'eth it with this, *it's an extraordinary caſe*; and hence not 'to be brought in for an ordinary example. Hence he 'ſpeaks thus, when therefore the time comes that Chriſt 'ſhall come and be crucified again, and thou one of 'the thieves to be crucified with him, and it fall out 'that thou be the beſt of the two, then ſhalt thou be 'ſaved by Chriſt, that deſpiſing Chriſt now, puts off thy 'repentance till then; ſo I ſay here, there is ſomewhat 'imitable and ordinary in the apoſtle's example, in ad-'mitting three thouſand in a day, but ſomething unuſu-'al, and far different from our condition now; and 'therefore that I would ſay, when the time comes, that 'the ſpirit is poured out on all fleſh; and that time is 'known to be the ſpring-tide, and large meaſure of the 'Spirit, when miniſters are ſo honoured as to convert 'many thouſands at a ſermon; and ſo God and reaſon

'call for quickneſs; when elders of churches are as 'ſharp-ſighted as the apoſtles, when the converſion of 'men alſo ſhall be moſt eminent, and that in ſuch places 'where 'tis death, or half-hanging, to profeſs the Lord 'Jeſus; as that they ſhall be prickt at their hearts, 'gladly receive the word, lay down their necks on the 'block, caſt down all their eſtates at the churches feet, 'out of love to God's ordinances; when men ſhall not 'have chriſtian education, the example and crowd of 'Chriſtians, from the teeth outwardly, to preſs them to 'the door of the church, as thoſe times had not; then 'for my part, if three hundred thouſand were converted, 'I ſhould receive them as gladly, and as manifeſtly, as 'they receive Chriſt. But truly there is ſuch little tak-'ings now, that we have leiſure enough to look upon 'our money, and the hypocriſy of the world gives us 'good reaſon to ſtay and ſee.' Mr. *Shepard's ſermons on the parable*, &c. part 2. p. 184, &c. This ſermon was preached at *Cambridge*, near *Boſton*, about the year 1640, and ſo about 130 years ago, ten years after they began to ſettle *Boſton*, by one of the moſt Godly and moſt celebrated miniſters then in the country, a few years before his death. And this paſſage ſhews us the ſpirit of the Godly in *New-England*, in thoſe early days. And to all Godly people in the country the name of Mr. *Shepard* is precious to this day, and Mr. M. knew it; and therefore, to keep himſelf in countenance, thinks fit to bring in him as a friend to *his external covenant*. But is not this an extraordinary method? To omit the reſt, we will mention but one inſtance more.

6. Another extraordinary method Mr. M. takes to ſupport his ſcheme, is to bring arguments againſt us, built on principles, which he himſelf does not believe to be true; and which, if they were true, would infallibly overthrow his own ſcheme. Nay, and perſiſts in ſuch arguments, after their fallacy has been pointed out, without ſaying one word in excuſe for ſuch a piece of conduct.

Thus he inſiſts upon it, that if infants may have the

ſeal of the covenant without ſaving grace, then alſo may the adult. And therefore ſaving grace is not needful to qualify any one for ſealing ordinances. And therefore the covenant to be ſealed is not the covenant of grace, but an external covenant 'diſtinct from the covenant of grace,' which only requires, as a neceſſary qualification for ſealing ordinances, that ſinners ſhould be under ſuch 'convictions,' as to 'come to a fixed reſolution to forſake all known ſin, and practiſe all known duty.'—But have all infants theſe *convictions*, and ſuch *a fixed reſolution?* Does he believe they have? Is there any evidence of it? No, he does not believe they have. Nor is there any evidence, that there ever was one infant, ſince the world began, that had theſe *convictions*, and ſuch *a fixed reſolution*.—What then does Mr. M. mean! Does he mean to give up infant baptiſm? no, by no means. What then does he mean? Odd as it is, he means to confute our ſcheme by an argument which confutes his own, i. e. by an argument, built on a principle, which he himſelf does not believe to be true, viz. *That the ſame qualifications are neceſſary in infants, as in the adult, to qualify them for baptiſm.* For Mr. M. does not believe this principle to be true. For he does not believe that infants need any qualification at all. And yet he does believe that the adult muſt have ſome qualification. Now how extraordinary is it, for a man of learing, to conduct thus; and to go on and perſevere in this conduct without a bluſh, or the leaſt excuſe, in the ſight of all the country, after the abſurdity had been pointed out before his eyes, in my former book, p. 64, 65, 66.

And thus again, he inſiſts upon it, that if ſaving grace is neceſſary, then no man can with a good conſcience join with the church, without aſſurance, an aſſurance equal to that certainty which we have of facts, which we ſee with our own eyes, and to the truth of which we can give oath before any civil court. p. 78, 79. But 'ninety nine in a hundred of true believers' are deſtitute of this aſſurance, he ſays, p. 80. and therefore ſaving grace is

not

not needful. Nothing more is needful then to come to a fixed reſolution to forſake all known ſin and practiſe all known duty.—But does Mr. M. believe, that no man can with a good conſcience, join with the church, without being thus infallibly certain, that he has the requiſite qualifications? for on the ſuppoſed truth of this propoſition is his argument built.—But does Mr. M. believe this propoſition? does he teach his people to believe it? had all his church members this high degree of infallible aſſurance, that they had the requiſite qualifications, when they joined with the church? and have they the infallible aſſurance every time they attend ſealing ordinances? an aſſurance equal to that certainty, which they have, that they ever ſaw the ſun ſhine! That they '*are come to a fixed reſolution to forſake all known ſin, and practiſe all known duty*? Does he inſiſt upon it in his public preaching, and in his private inſtructions, that without this high degree of aſſurance, without this infallible certainty, they cannot with a good conſcience come to baptiſm or to the Lord's table? that 'they are guilty of groſs prevarication, and double dealing with God,' if they do. p. 82. Becauſe no man ought to come without this infallible certainty, that he has the requiſite qualifications?—I ſay, does Mr. M. believe theſe things himſelf? or does he teach them to his own people? I appeal to his conſcience. I appeal to his people for my witneſſes. Mr. M. does not believe that men muſt have this infallible certainty, that they have the requiſite qualifications, in order to attend ſealing ordinances, with a good conſcience. Nor does he teach this doctrine to his people.—What then does he mean, in all he ſays upon this ſubject to us? Why, he means to confute our ſcheme, by an argument, built on a principle which he does not believe to be true. And which, were it true, would effectually overthrow his own ſcheme. And all this, after the fallacy of this manner of reaſoning had been pointed out before his eyes, as clear as the ſun, in Mr. *Edwards*'s laſt piece on the ſacramental controverſy, to which no anſwer has ever been made.—Now is it

not *extraordinary*, that a man of ſo good ſenſe, ſhould urge againſt us arguments built on principles, which he himſelf does not believe; and which, if they were true, would effectually overthrow his own ſcheme? For no unregenerate man in this world is, or ever was, or ever will be, while ſuch, infallibly certain, as he is of what he ſees with his eyes, that his reſolution to forſake all known ſin and practiſe all known duty is 'fixed,' ſo that his religion will not prove like that of the ſtony and thorny ground hearers. For if the common proteſtant doctrine of the *ſaints perſeverance* is ſcriptural, yet Mr. M. does not believe the doctrine of the *perſeverance of graceleſs ſinners* in their religious reſolutions is taught in ſcripture. So that there is no poſſible way, in which, an awakened ſinner can be certain that his reſolution is 'fixed,' without an immediate revelation from heaven, to give him this aſſurance. But Mr. M. does not believe, that an immediate revelation from heaven ever was, or ever will be made for this purpoſe. But he well knows, that without any ſuch a revelation, Peter was able to ſay, *Lord, thou knoweſt all things, thou knoweſt that I love thee.* And he well knew, that the ſaints in the apoſtolic age are ſpoken of, without exception, as having *received the ſpirit of adoption, whereby the cried abba, Father*; with an aſſurance that they *were the children of God.* Rom. 8. 14. 15, 16. Nor is there one inſtance, among all the apoſtolic converts, that can be mentioned, of a *doubting ſaint.* Nor does it appear, by the acts of the apoſtles, or by their epiſtles, but that 'aſſurance did in thoſe days attend the firſt acts of faith among all their converts. See Acts 2. 41—47. and 8, 39. and 10. 44—47. and 16. 30—34. For, to uſe the apoſtolic language, *Being juſtified by faith, they had peace with God, and rejoiced in hope of the glory of God: becauſe the love of God was ſhed abroad in their hearts by the holy Ghoſt.* Rom. 5. 15. *And they knew that they had paſſed from death to life.* 1 Joh. 3. 14. And this renders the conduct of Mr. M. ſo much the more extraordinary, that he, with ſo much zeal, ſhould puſh an argument, which, were it well grounded, is much more againſt his own

ſcheme,

ſcheme, than it is againſt the apoſtolic practice. For it does not appear, but that their converts univerſally *knew that they were paſſed from death to life.* Whereas it is capable of full proof, that no one unregenerate man ever did know, that his religious reſolutions were 'fixed.' So that his goodneſs ſhould not be as the morning cloud and as the early dew, which quickly paſſeth away.

Beſides, we are naturally as conſcious of our volitions and affections, as we of our ſpeculations; and therefore we are as capable of knowing what we chooſe and love, as what we believe: and, therefore, we may as well know that we love God and Chriſt, if we really do, as know that we have right ſpeculative ideas of the true and real character of God and Chriſt, and of the doctrines of revealed religion, in which they are exhibited. Many are confident they *believe aright*, who are hereticks; and many are confident they *love aright* who are hypocrites: and yet this hinders not but that true ſaints, who believe aright and love in ſincerity, may know it: and know the one as well as the other. And it cannot be proved, but that there are as many, who have doubts about the truth of goſpel doctrines, as there are that have doubts about the ſincerity of their love to goſpel doctrines. It cannot be proved, that there is one profeſſor, who doubts the ſincerity of his love, who has an infallible aſſurance which is the right ſcheme of religion, among all the ſchemes in vogue. It is very evident, that there is a great degree of ſcepticiſm among the profeſſors of chriſtianity in this age, and as much among the learned, as among the unlearned; as is obvious to every one, who is acquainted with books and men. And, for aught that appears, it might be as difficult to find men, who believe chriſtianity to be true, real chriſtianity I mean, to that degree, as to have no doubts about what is truth; as to find men that love it, ſo as to have no doubts about their love. This is certain, that it was the conſtant doctrine of Mr. *Stoddard*, that *no unregenerate man does know the goſpel to be true*, as every one knows who is acquainted

quainted with his writings. And it is alſo certain, that in the apoſtolic age, it was the univerſally received doctrine of the whole Chriſtian church, that *whoſoever believeth that Jeſus is the Chriſt is born of God.* 1 Joh. 5. 1. And it was in that age believed, that the unregenerate, however they might, for a time, believe and rejoyce; yet neither their faith, nor their affections were 'fixed,' becauſe they had *no root* in themſelves: and therefore in time of temptation they would fall away from both. Mat. 13. And therefore, if we open the door wide enough to let in the unregenerate, as ſuch, into the church, we muſt not inſiſt on their being 'fixed' what to believe, or 'fixed' what to do; for there is *no root* in them. Much leſs muſt we affirm, that they muſt be 'infallibly certain' that they are 'fixed,' when if the bible is the word of God, it is infallibly certain, that they are not 'fixed.' And their very confidence, that they are 'fixed,' is a full proof, that they do not underſtand and believe the goſpel, which declares, that they are not 'fixed,' that they have *no root* in themſelves.

But to return.

Our author ſays, p. 79. 'If it is a real gracious ſtate, 'that gives us a real right to join with the church; then 'it is a known gracious ſtate that gives us a known right.' And he adds, 'This is a ſelf evident propoſition.'---And this he ſays in order to prove, 'that no man can, with 'a good conſcience, make this profeſſion, without as 'certain a knowledge of the gracious ſtate of his own 'heart; as he muſt have of any particular fact, about 'which he is called to give an evidence in a civil court.' ---But if this argument is concluſive, then his own ſcheme is overthrown. For, turn the tables, and the argument ſtands thus.

If it is real orthodoxy, that gives us a right to join with the church; then it is known orthodoxy, that gives us a known right. And I may add, 'This is a ſelf-evident propoſition.' And therefore, according to Mr. M. *no man can, with a good conſcience, join with the church, without as certain*

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a knowledge of his orthodoxy, as he muſt have, of any particular fact, about which he is called to give an evidence in a civil court.----So then, according to Mr. M. unregenerate, graceleſs men, muſt be as certain, which, of all the various ſchemes of religion in vogue, in the Chriſtian world, is the right one, as they are of any fact, which they ſee with their eyes, to the truth of which they can make oath, or they cannot, with a good conſcience, join with the church: i. e. they muſt have as high a degree of infallibility, as the apoſtles had under inſpiration, or they cannot, with a good conſcience, join with the church.---But does Mr. M. believe this? Does he look upon his graceleſs, conſcientious church-members, as infallible as the apoſtles?

To ſay, that real orthodoxy is not a requiſite qualification, is to give up his own ſcheme.---To ſay, that altho' real orthodoxy is a requiſite qualification, yet a degree of infallibility, equal to that which the apoſtles had under inſpiration, is not neceſſary, to qualify a man, with a good conſcience, to join with the church, is to give up his argument. For the apoſtles were not more certain, which was the orthodox ſcheme of religion, than we are of facts, which we ſee with our eyes, and which we can ſwear poſitively, that we did ſee. And our certainty muſt be equal to this, he ſays, or we cannot, with a good conſcience, join with the church.---Every conſcientious, graceleſs church-member, therefore, according to Mr. M. is as infallible, in points of orthodoxy, as was the apoſtle Paul.---But does Mr. M. believe this? No, by no means. What then does he mean? Why, he means to confute our ſcheme, by an argument, built on a principle, which he himſelf does not believe to be true; and, which, were it true, would overthrow his own ſcheme.

Objection. *But I know that I believe ſuch and ſuch doctrines; yea, I can ſwear I believe them.*

Anſwer. You can ſwear, that you believe your own creed; but can you ſwear that your own creed is orthodox? For not a confident belief, but real orthodoxy is, according

according to Mr. M. a requiſite qualification to church-membership. Therefore, according to him, you muſt be certain, that your creed is orthodox; even as certain as you are of facts which you ſee, and to the truth of which you can make oath before the civil magiſtrate. Which is a degree of certainty equal to that which the apoſtles had under inſpiration.

The *Arians*, the *Socinians*, the *Pelagians*, the *Papiſts*, &c. &c. can ſwear that they believe their ſchemes; but does this qualify them to be church-members? Would Mr. M. receive them to communion? If ſo, then it is no matter what ſcheme of religion men believe, if they do but believe it confidently. And then orthodoxy is not a requiſite qualification for church-membership, but rather bigotry?

Our author ſays, p. 78, 79. 'This affair of covenanting with God, Moſes ſtiles, Deut. 29, 14. *This covenant and this oath.*' And 'will it do, to tell people, 'that they may give a poſitive evidence, when they have 'only a prevailing opinion about the fact?'—That is, will it do, to tell people, that they may enter into covenant with God, and bind themſelves under the ſolemnity of an oath, as the Iſraelites did, to keep covenant, (Deut. 26. 27. *Thou haſt avouched the Lord this day to be thy God, and to walk in his ways, and to keep his ſtatutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and to hearken to his voice,*) when they have only a prevailing opinion, that they have *ſuch an heart in them?* but have not a certain knowledge of it, as they have of facts, which, under oath, they can poſitively declare to be true.

Anſwer 1. When men have not *ſuch a heart in them*, they are not qualified to enter into *this covenant and this oath.* And, therefore, if unregeneracy conſiſts in being without ſuch an heart, and in having an heart oppoſite hereunto, agreable to St. Paul's doctrine, Rom. 8. 7. Then unregeneracy diſqualifies us, for entering into covenant with God.

2. No man can, with a good conſcience, enter into this

covenant, unleſs he is conſcious to himſelf, that he has ſuch an heart, to ſuch a degree of clearneſs, as to be ſatisfied, in his conſcience, that he indeed has ſuch an heart. And, therefore, for men, who know, that they have not ſuch an heart, to enter into this covenant, is groſs immorality.—But he, who is ſatisfied in his conſcience, that he has ſuch an heart, may, with a good conſcience, enter into this covenant. That is, his conſcience will approve of his conduct in ſo doing.

3. A man may be ſatisfied in his conſcience, that he has ſuch an heart, by prevailing evidence, ſhort of ſtrict certainty.---For inſtance. Mr. Mather was ſatisfied in his conſcience, that it was his duty, to write in the defence of the external covenant, upon prevailing evidence of its truth; but yet, if it were put to him, he would not poſitively declare under oath, that he knows it to be true; as he knows the truth of facts, which he ſees with his eyes. For he declares in his preface, 'Yet, I am not 'ſo fond of my own judgment, or tenacious of my own 'practice, but that *I ſtand ready to give them both up*, when 'any one ſhall do the friendly office of ſetting light before 'me.'---And therefore, he cannot ſwear, that his ſcheme is the true ſcripture ſcheme. He knows, that he has written on this ſubject. This fact he is certain of. He could give oath to this before a civil court. Nor could he give up the truth of this fact, let all the light in the world be ſet before him. Nor could he, with a good conſcience, offer to give up the truth of this fact, on any condition: becauſe he knows, that the fact is true. He knows it with certainty; with infallible certainty. But he has not equal certainty, that his ſcheme is true. It was only his prevailing opinion. And ſo, he offers to give it up on further light. Yet, he acted conſciouſly in writing in its defence. That is, his conſcience, inſtead of condemning, approved of his conduct.---For the truth of this, I appeal to Mr. M.---The application is eaſy.---And yet,

4. It is readily granted, that we are to blame for every

very wrong judgment we make, in moral matters, relative both to truth and duty, how conſcientious ſoever, we were in making the judgment. Thus, for inſtance, Paul, before his converſion, was conſcientious in judging and acting againſt Chriſtianity; but ſtill he was to blame for judging and acting as he did. And if Mr. M's external covenant is unſcriptural, how conſcientious ſoever he has been, in believing and acting as he has, yet he is to blame. So, if we judge, that we have ſuch an heart, when in fact we have not, how conſcientious ſoever we have been, yet ſtill we are criminal. For we might have known better. It was our fault that we did not know better. And in this world, or in the next, we ſhall know, that the blame lies at our door.—Therefore,

5. Theſe words of our bleſſed Saviour ought to be attended to and regarded, by every one, who entertains thoughts of making a profeſſion of his holy religion. Luk. 14. 25---35. *And there went great multitudes with him*, and inſtead of preſſing them to an inconſiderate profeſſion of his religion, as a means of their converſion, *he turned and ſaid unto them, if any man come to me*, by an open, public profeſſion, *and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and ſiſters, yea, and his own life alſo*, ſo as to have an heart to give up all for my ſake, *he cannot be my diſciple*; but will in time of trial, deſert me. *And whoſoever doth not bear his croſs, and come after me*, with a heart to ſuffer every thing for my ſake, *cannot be my diſciple*; but will, in time of trial, deſert me. Therefore, conſider what you do. *For which of you, intending to build a tower, ſitteth not down firſt, and counteth the coſt*, &c. &c. *So likewiſe, whoſoever he be of you, that forſaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my diſciple.* My diſciples are the ſalt of the earth. *Salt is good*, if it is ſalt; *but if the ſalt have loſt its ſavour, wherewith ſhall it be ſeaſoned.* It is good for nothing. *It is neither fit for the land, not yet for the dunghill: but men caſt it out*, as good for nothing. And what are ſuch diſciples good for, who will deſert me in time of trial. Attend to what I ſay. *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.*

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THE CONCLUSION.

Mr. M. ſpeaking of our ſentiments of religion, as contained in preſident *Edwards*'s *Treatiſe concerning religious affections*, which is, beyond doubt, one of the beſt books that has been publiſhed on experimental religion and vital piety ſince the days of inſpiration, ſays, p. 36. 'Theſe ſentiments are ſurprizingly ſpread in the land, in the preſent day.'—Yes, and always will ſpread among people in proportion as true religion revives and ſpreads. Nor am I without hopes, that Mr. M. ſhould he thoro'ly look into the ſcheme, and get a right underſtanding of it, would yet himſelf become a proſelyte to it. And if he ſhould become a proſelyte to it, he would ſoon give up his external covenant, as being wholly inconſiſtent with it.

And it is quite certain, that when the divine promiſes, ſcattered thro' the ſacred writings, relative to the glorious prevalence of true Chriſtianity, come to be accompliſhed, that Mr. M's graceleſs covenant will become a uſeleſs and an impracticable thing. When *nations ſhall be born in a day*; when *all the people ſhall be righteous*, when *the knowledge of the Lord ſhall fill the earth as the waters cover the ſea*; people will not deſire to make a graceleſs profeſſion. Nay, they can never be perſuaded to do it in that day. For then they will *love Chriſt more than father, or mother, or wife, or children, or houſes, or lands; yea, more than their own lives.* And men who really love their wives and children, are able ordinarily to ſay, with truth and a good conſcience, that they do love them. Yea, it would be thought a ſign, that men, generally, if not univerſally, hated their wives, in any kingdom, city, or town, ſhould it be known, that 'ninety-nine in an hundred' of them had ſuch doubts, that with a good conſcience they could not ſay, that they loved them. Mr. *Stoddard*, in his *Treatiſe concerning the nature of converſion*, ſays, p. 79. 'We do not know of one Godly man in the ſcripture, that was under darkneſs about his ſincerity.' And our *catechiſm* ſays, 'The benefits which in this life 'do either accompany or flow from juſtification, adop-

'tion,

'tion, and ſanctification, are *aſſurance of God's love*, 'peace of conſcience, joy in the Holy Ghoſt, increaſe of 'grace, and perſeverence therein to the end.'—And when religion revives in its purity and glory, aſſurance will become as common a thing among profeſſors, as it was among the apoſtolic converts, in the apoſtolic churches.—And even now, ſhould a man and woman preſent themſelves before a clergyman, to enter into the marriage-covenant, and at the ſame time declare, that they doubted their love to each other to ſuch a degree, that with a good conſcience they could not give their conſent to *the form of words* in common uſe, becauſe that would imply a profeſſion of mutual love, no judicious man would think them fit to be married. The application is eaſy.

Nothing renders a graceleſs covenant needful but the prevalence of graceleſſneſs among our people. For did our people all of them *love Chriſt more than father, and mother, wife and children*, no man would deſire to have the covenant of grace ſet aſide, and a graceleſs covenant ſubſtituted in its room, in our churches. When, therefore, that day comes, in which *ſatan ſhall be bound*, who at preſent *deceives the nations of the earth*, that he may *deceive them no more*: When the great *harveſt* comes, of which, what happened in the apoſtolic age, was but *the firſt fruits*; and *the ſtone cut out of the mountain without hands becomes great, and fills the whole earth*, and *the God of heaven ſets up a kingdom*, and *all people, nations and languages ſerve him*, and *the kingdom and dominion, and the greatneſs of the kingdom under the whole heaven is given to the people of the ſaints of the Moſt High, and all dominions ſhall ſerve him*; then, even then, true godlineſs will be univerſally profeſſed, and univerſally practiſed.

Since therefore this graceleſs covenant will ere long be univerſally exploded, and *rooted up*, as ſhall *every plant which our heavenly Father hath not planted*, why ſhould not we all now unite to give it up, and to invite our people to become Chriſtians indeed, to profeſs and practiſe according

cording to the true import of their baptiſm? It is as much their duty and as much their intereſt to become Chriſtians now, as it will be in any future period of their lives. They have from God no leave to delay. Thanks be to God 'that theſe ſentiments are ſurprizingly ſpreading in this land, in the preſent day.'—Nor ought it to paſs unnoticed, that every attempt to prevent their ſpreading has hitherto had the contrary effect. For while thoſe who oppoſe them, how ingenious and learned ſoever they be, are obliged to run into the groſſeſt abſurdities and inconſiſtencies, in their own defence, as one error leads on to another, it naturally tends to open the eyes of all candid men, who attend to the controverſy. And may we not hope, that ſo candid and ingenuous a writer as Mr. *Mather* is repreſented to be, 'who 'is not fond of his own judgment, or tenacious of his 'own practice, but ſtands ready to give them both up, 'when any one ſhall do him the friendly office of ſet-'ting light before him,' will upon a calm review of all that has been ſaid, become a friend to *the good old way* of our forefathers, the firſt ſettlers of *New-England*, and come into that plan on which the *New-England* churches were originally formed.---Which, may God of his infinite mercy grant, thro' Jeſus Chriſt. AMEN.


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